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VOYAGE

ALONG

The Eastern Coast of Africa,

TO

MOSAMBIQUE, JOHANNA, AND QUILOA;

TO

ST. HELENA;

TO

Rio de Janeiro, Bahia, and Pernambuco in Brazil,

IN THE NISUS FRIGATE.

BY JAMES PRIOR, Esq. R.N.

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VOYAGE

ALONG

The Eastern Coast of Africa,

&c. &c. &c.

Table Bay, Cape of Good Hope, April.

WE have been here since the beginning of February, enjoying the climate, amusements, fruits (no small luxury to sailors,) scenery, and every thing else of which the place and season—for this month is the gay season of the colony—admits. The heats of summer are now nearly over; and winter, as it is called, is just commencing; but this winter, which continues till October, is quite as fine as our English month of May; frosts, and fogs, and snow to the knees, are utterly unknown!

The rides and walks in the vicinity of the capital, some of which are very pretty, added to balls, plays, and the races, have occupied nearly all our time, as indeed is commonly the case while in harbour. The latter amusement concluded a few days ago, after much sport to the amateurs. The mysteries of the turf seem fully as intricate here as in more polished places; betting and jockeying are pursued with a spirit that would not discredit even Newmarket. The course is on Green Point, on the verge of the bay; it was attended by multitudes, some in handsome vehicles, but the greater part in the light travelling waggons, common to the colony, filled with females of every age, class, and complexion. A dinner to the members concluded the meeting, followed of course by a ball to the ladies; and the *amusements* of the week finished, on Saturday, with a private race, the execution of several malefactors near the ground, a cock-fight, and a duel between two gentlemen holding official situations, nearly fatal; so that we could not complain of want of variety!

The turf-club is formed of all the principal persons in the colony, English and native; two meetings are held annually, in September and April. A Mr. Van Reenan is the principal breeder; he has been the owner of all the best horses, and is said to be so great an adept in equestrian birth, pedigree, and education, that partly by his means, added to the scientific instructions of our countrymen, the improvement in the

breed of horses, within the last five years, has been so great as to have doubled their value.

A tolerable hackney now costs above 200 rix-dollars (or about 30*l.*,) which six years ago might have been readily purchased for less than 100; mares are scarcely ever used for purposes of labour, being considered unfit for it; and the horses are all perfect. Almost every man keeps at least one horse; for, without this useful appendage, it would be difficult to have any enjoyment of the place, to view its scenery, to travel, or to transact business beyond the range of the streets. Kept at a public stable, the daily charge is two dollars; excellent hacks, however, superior to the majority let out in London, may be always had, at the same place, for four dollars per diem.

From the horses our attention was directed to the cattle, which are remarkable for long legs as well as horns, added to striking prominency of bone—something nearly akin to Pharaoh's race; the beef, nevertheless, is sweet and good, and, when stall-fed, scarcely inferior to any; but this practice is little used. An establishment has lately taken place at Algoa bay, the maritime boundary of the settlement eastward, for the purpose of curing beef, government being expected to take three thousand barrels annually; the price I do not immediately recollect, but it is comparatively trifling, there being salt-pans, as well as abundance of cattle, in the neighbourhood. Nothing, perhaps, more demonstrates the indolence of the people, or the want of capital, or ignorance of the resources of their territory, or all these causes combined, than that this profitable scheme is only commenced, or rather said to be commenced, after being seventeen years under consideration; and should things go on well may probably be completed in another half century. During this time, England has been exporting beef hither, for the use of the navy, at five times the price at which it might have been prepared on the spot.

Sheep seem amazingly numerous; they are characterized by want of wool and abundance of tail, the latter being a peculiar feature, broad at the base and tapering to the apex, and formed of solid adipous substance, sometimes weighing so much as twenty pounds. This species is also common in Tartary, Persia, Egypt, Barbary, and Madagascar; in the latter, as well as here, they have a hair-coat, but in the Levant a fine wool.

Cape Town has just had a fresh alarm—that constitutional sluggishness of the people, which is remarked by strangers, having received a sudden and violent fillip by the introduction of the small-pox. A Portuguese slave-ship, it appears, prize

to one of our cruisers, having anchored in the bay, the wretched people, as is customary, were sent on-shore for the disposal of government; but this fatal disease being by some unknown means introduced among them, communicated to the domestic slaves in the town, and from these rapidly spread through all classes.*

It is scarcely possible to give you an adequate idea of the consternation produced by this calamity, for almost every family was more or less open to its attacks, from the general neglect of inoculation; the pestilence itself was not more dreaded; people hurried along the streets dreading each other; friends shunned friends; some thought of barricading their doors, and others of flying for security to the country. In this emergency the governor issued a proclamation, putting the town in a species of quarantine; no persons were to appear in the streets, except on urgent business; all shops and places of public resort to be shut, and the performance of divine service suspended; in addition to which, infected houses were ordered to hoist a white flag, and all persons quitting them, in order to supply the wants of the people, to wear a badge of the same colour round the arm. These were whimsically denominated *K. S. P.*—not knights of St. Patrick, however, but of the small-pox. The deserted streets looked like those of a city ravaged by the plague, or a grand lazaret of infected; yet the disease had taken such deep root in a few days, that scarcely any escaped who did not keep carefully secluded till an opportunity offered of submitting to vaccination.

Fortunately a supply of matter had been recently introduced from St. Helena, by the master of a trader, who then lay in "durance vile," and might probably have remained there, had not this "ill wind," according to the proverb, blown him out by means of a public subscription. The virus rapidly increasing with the fears of the people, brought crowds to the Stadt House to undergo the operation, and the whole colony soon enjoyed the benefit of this important discovery; such indeed was the general eagerness, or ignorance, that hundreds wished to make "assurance doubly sure," by submitting to the process a second, third, or even fourth time, and could scarcely be convinced that this was unnecessary.

For the slaves, an hospital was established on *Paarden Island*, at the head of the bay; here, and in the town, many of this class, as well as children, were carried off. This was

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* The credit of the early discovery of the disease is due to Dr. Samuel Leeson, attached to the staff to whose professional talents and gentlemanlike manners, the writer feels much satisfaction in paying this small tribute of acknowledgement.

not the first time of the disease being introduced here, great ravages having been committed here formerly, according to all accounts. The meazles have, likewise, been brought hither in vessels; yet the preventive regulations, so far as respects the port, are sufficiently strict. Neither disease, however, I am informed, has ever extended to the interior.

During the dulness occasioned by the "quarantine" in town, I accompanied my friend L. to Stellenbosch, about thirty miles distant. This is not only the prettiest village in the colony, but may vie with many others in finer countries, as well for beauty of situation, as a degree of old-fashioned neatness in its rural arrangements, resembling the pleasantest in our own land, and which thence strike the eye with the familiarity of old friends. The style of the houses, indeed, the shading of the trees, the shrubs that darken or appear desirous to enter the windows, the humble seats without doors, whence the aged complacently survey the village sports; the rural church, the murmuring of a brook over a pebbly bed, almost drowned by the noisy laugh and clatter of females purifying linen, the lowing of cattle, the singing of birds—all serve to awaken the most gratifying recollections.

It lies in a fertile valley, producing abundance of grain, culinary vegetables, and fruit; particularly the grape, orange, apple, and pear, the latter of a very large size; and terminated in the distance by the hills bounding the district called the Paarl. The church, though small, is neat and well attended; the clergy in the settlement being strict in the performance of their duties, and not only respectable but respected. The principal personage, however, is the Landdrost, or chief magistrate, an officer of more extensive powers than any known to us, being the sole organ of the government in all public duties; in addition to which he arbitrates petty quarrels, and, in case of necessity, calls out the local armed force, his deliberations being assisted by a petty council. During our stay, he added to his other titles that of protector of health; for the "quarantine" regulations arriving from town, the village was declared in a state of blockade; letters and parcels were not only smoked, and sprinkled with vinegar, but travellers of the lower class had to pass the ordeals of fire and water, as well as acid, before being admitted into the community. Besides a commodious house and grounds, the Landdrost receives a salary of 3000 rix-dollars per annum, in addition to some emoluments.

Strangers touching at the Cape make it almost a point of duty to visit Stellenbosch, on account of its salubrity, scenery, quietude, and consequent regularity in the mode of living. By invalids, particularly the Anglo-Indians, who occasi-

onally resort hither in order to recruit shattered constitutions, it is invariably chosen for their place of residence; and as few hire houses, the custom of boarding is universal; we stopped at Mr. W——'s, and found not the least portion of our amusement in the musical talents of a favourite daughter; evening-parties among the young ladies are not uncommon.

The grape-season, which is commonly a busy time with the farmers, has just concluded, after a plentiful harvest. The fruit is not only large and exceedingly delicious, but said to possess strong nutritive qualities, the slaves of a wine-boor being frequently observed to gain flesh during the season; the same thing is even remarked of his dogs, which, as well as birds, are such determined thieves in the vineyards, that boys are obliged to be stationed to keep them off by the smacking of huge whips.

Notwithstanding the fine flavour of the grape, equal, perhaps, to any in the world, yet an acknowledged inferiority exists in the wine, which, besides being deficient in body, has an earthy as well as slightly acid taste, seldom relished by strangers. Some of these peculiarities depend upon the farmers, for it is admitted, that stalks as well as fruit, ripe and unripe, clean or mixed with impurities, are often indiscriminately put under the press in order to make the most of the crop. The process otherwise is conducted in the same slovenly manner, being frequently entrusted to persons little acquainted with the subject; the casks too, though expensive articles, are bad; and often so much smoked with sulphur as to taste the wine for two or three years. If exported under this age, it will sometimes sour, as lately occurred in a quantity sent to the Mauritius, though by a local regulation none is permitted to be brought to town for sale which has not been kept six months in cask by the farmer. From the merchants' cellars it is retailed at from ten to sixty dollars the half *aum* (nineteen gallons,) according to the quality.

Of the different species, *Cape Madeira* is the best bodied and finest flavoured; mixed with a little real Madeira it forms a very pleasant wine, and improves materially by age. *Steen* wine being more moderate in price, is more extensively used; it is sharper than the former; the quality introduced at English tables costs about thirty-five dollars the half aum—among the natives, for their own use, little more than half. Imitations of Hock, Vin de Grave, and Port, have been attempted; the two former with success; the celebrated Constantia, more resembling liqueur than wine, is the produce of two farms, situated behind Table Mountain.

The consumption here is very considerable; but in Eng-

land, notwithstanding the sanguine expectations to the contrary by the colonial merchants, I question whether it would ever be much in request, were even the restrictive duties withdrawn,*—certainly not, if Canary wine can be procured at an equally cheap rate. Among our resident countrymen, it is commonly drunk with dinner, though often introduced by an apology, a species of affectation very ridiculous, but very general, as if the want of expensive European wines were a diminution of their dignity. It is remarkable, however, that this is a prevailing weakness in all our colonies; a man's wines are supposed to form a criterion of his wealth and consequence; he who at home would scarcely venture on humble port, abroad aspires to claret, champaign, and burgundy, and will, therefore, often stretch a point in this way, should he be obliged to starve for it a month afterwards.

For the introduction of the grape, which took place about a century ago, the colony is indebted to a few French refugees, and it was one of the greatest benefits ever conferred on it; for, besides being an article of the first necessity, wine, with the exception of some whale-oil, and a few other articles, forms almost the only exportable commodity: its quality, I should likewise remark, has not only much improved within these five years, but is confidently expected to improve yearly; others doubt this, assigning as a reason, that, in consequence of the destructive effects of violent south-east winds, the vine must still continue to drag the ground as at present, thus imbibing and imparting to the liquor that earthy flavour which is supposed to be the effect of this contact, for that to attempt to defend the vineyards by planting trees, would so intercept the sun, as fully to counterbalance the evil effects of the winds. But the principal step to improvement in this, as well as in many other things here, is to lead the people away from old and absurd prejudices, which are retained by the majority with a more than religious veneration.

A considerable quantity of brandy is distilled, but of such a fiery, unwholesome nature, as to be a source of disease, instead of an assistant to the functions of life; none but the very lowest class use it. This branch of industry offers a fine opening to European capital and ingenuity. A distiller would, probably, soon realize a fortune; and a better brandy, besides forming a lucrative article of commerce, would, doubt-

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* This prediction, the writer admits, has not been altogether fulfilled, as the consumption in England is now considerable. The wine sold is, however, *Steen* wine, and not what is termed, at the Cape, Cape Madeira.

less, improve the wines. Beer, of a good quality, is in general use.

Many portions of territory within the colonial boundary, notwithstanding some journies undertaken for the purpose, are still but imperfectly known, as must inevitably be the case in a vast country destitute of roads, thinly peopled, studded with mountains, endless woods, and wildernesses of sand, the resort of the lion, elephant, buffaloe, and rhinoceros; of the Bosjesman and Kaffre, and where the traveller must often depend upon his gun for food, and his waggon for a habitation. Beyond the line of the common travelling tracks, few Europeans possess minute knowledge of the face of the country, what is known being confined to the wandering boors, whose accounts are not much to be depended upon: some time is therefore likely to elapse, before any documents purely statistical, respecting it, can be collected; yet, till these are obtained, the resources of the country cannot be properly understood.

The settlement, extending about 600 miles by 280, is divided into seven districts, or Drosdys, each under the jurisdiction of its landdrost, named the Cape, Stellenbosch, Tolbach, Zwellendam, Graaf Reynett, George, and Uitenhague. The population does not exceed 27,000 whites, nearly one-third of which reside in Cape-Town, and about 70,000 people of colour, including slaves and Hottentots. The latter seldom wander in hordes as formerly, but hire themselves to till the lands, or tend the flocks of the farmers; they are seldom, however, long stationary, and, notwithstanding every care of government, rapidly diminish in numbers, to which the use of "Cape brandy" tends not a little.

The face of the country offers every variety. Toward the interior it rises into extensive elevations, containing sandy tracts, destitute of grass or water, rugged mountains tenanted only by wild beasts, with here and there fine districts between; but near the boundary line it generally improves; and here there are vast flocks of sheep and cattle, particularly in Graaf Reynett, from which the principal supplies are derived. Nearer the coast the grain, fruits, and other vegetable productions of the most favoured countries, are raised in abundance, and no part of the world has afforded more variety to the botanist.

Notwithstanding the extent and number of woods situated in, or bordering the colony, good timber is scarce: the witteboom or silver-tree, though extremely pretty for ornamental purposes, is commonly of stunted growth, much of it lining the brow of Table Mountain, is used in the town for fire-wood. Oak and stink woods, though abundant and of large dimensions, are loose, or, as the carpenters say, *shaken*, in the heart.

Yellow wood is much superior. I have seen it answer very well for the smaller spars in his majesty's ships, but the others, except for occasional use as plank, are rarely fit for naval purposes. Much of the timber used in the arsenal comes from Plettenberg Bay. A gentleman, employed many months in procuring it, tells me, that there is in the vicinity of that place wood equal to any in the world, for every purpose, were there any mode of conveying it to the shore for embarkation.

Both the theory and practice of agriculture are indifferently understood; but in justice to the people, it must be admitted they have had serious obstacles to encounter, in deficient irrigation, want of capital, and of a working population, difficulty of supplying occasional necessities, distance of the farms from the only market for their produce, and the high price of slaves and farming implements. Add to these, the leading disadvantage of non-subdivision of labour. A slave who is by turns carpenter, mason, painter, smith, groom, cowherd, waggoner, and half a hundred more trades besides, cannot be expected to make an expert agriculturist. His master is nearly in the same situation; for, as head mechanic, he has either to direct or assist in these discordant occupations.

Inveterate prejudices, however, oppose stronger obstacles than even these. They will not be taught. An English farmer, recommended by the Board of Agriculture, was sent out during our former possession of the settlement, to introduce an improved system of tillage, but his plans were little attended to: manure is little used: the hoe not in request: a crazy, cumbrous plough, not improved, perhaps, since its introduction 150 years ago, drawn by six or eight oxen, turns up the earth. "'Tis well, Mynheer," replied a farmer to a friend of mine, reasoning with him, for the five hundreth time, on the superiority of horses. "But my forefathers used oxen, and why should they not do for me?" This is the universal answer. By the same mode of reasoning we might conclude, that as their forefather Adam went without breeches, they ought to do so likewise!

The soil in the cultivated parts is fertile, and, being often mixed with sand, generally easy of tillage. The Cape, Stellenbosch, and Tolbach districts, produce the greatest portion of the wines, as well as grain. Wheat and barley, of which large quantities are raised, are both of the best quality. Strangers sometimes remark a sandiness in the bread, which, on first calling here twenty months ago, we attributed to the ingenuity of the baker, in substituting the parent earth for its produce; but this is not the case, the wheat of whole farms being occasionally affected by it. Some assign as a reason the

softness of the mill-stones, while others attribute it to the subtle parts of sand driven about by the south-east winds, penetrating to the heart of the grain.

So little were the resources of the country understood by the farmers some years ago, that when a regiment of dragoons first arrived here, the most intelligent gave it as their opinion, the settlement could not supply them with forage. Now, I believe, half-a-dozen regiments may be supplied with ease. Another instance of non-acquaintance with the essential particulars of population and resources may be mentioned. Shortly after the last occupation of Cape-Town by Sir David Baird, a report gained universal belief among all ranks, that 18,000 boors from the interior were marching to dispossess the English, though a little reflection would have suggested there were not a third this number of whites fit to bear arms in the whole colony. But from what I can learn, the *boors*, so long as they can sell their cattle to advantage, and remain exempted from strict legal restraints, care little whether the English or Chinese possess the town.

Simon's Bay, July.

The prevailing subject of conversation here lately, has been the termination of a war with the *Kaffres*, a bold, independent race of natives, differing altogether from the Hottentot and Bosjesman, whose territories border the eastern parts of the colony.

The extent of their country is considerable, over which the principal hordes wander, as their inclination or wants require. They live chiefly by the chace and flocks of sheep and cattle, which are often amazingly large, and at the same time are not neglectful of agriculture, extensive plains being frequently observed, covered with the grain termed Kaffre corn. In person they are a well-formed, athletic race, tenacious of their country, as well as active and warlike in its defence. By the colonists they are represented as vindictive, inhospitable, and treacherous; and, judging from the treatment generally experienced by the crews of vessels wrecked on their coast, this character would seem just; for on several occasions it has been ascertained, that these unfortunate men were either suffered to perish, or at once murdered.

The late war, it appears, arose from the encroachments of a horde led by an uncle to the principal king of the Kaffres, who, compelled to quit the dominions of his nephew from misconduct, not only fixed his tribe within the colonial territory, but commenced pillaging the property of the farmers without mercy, refusing, when requested, to retire. Detach-

ments of troops were therefore applied for. In the mean time, a deputation of fourteen of the principal people of the district, headed by the landdrost of Graaff Reynett, who, from his readiness at all times to attend to the complaints or desires of the savages, was considered a favourite among them, proceeded to treat amicably of the matters in dispute.

The place of meeting was an open space, surrounded by woods. Both parties, according to agreement, were to be equal in numbers, and unarmed. A few difficulties were at first started, but on the whole, the conference proceeded pretty amicably till towards its conclusion, when, as the colonists were preparing to retire, the treacherous Kaffres, who had brought spears concealed under their mantles, formed of the skins of wild beasts, suddenly fell upon them, and being soon joined by others concealed in the woods, murdered eleven of the party. Out of the three who escaped, two were dreadfully wounded; the landdrost had succeeded in reaching his horse, and was in the act of mounting when transfixed with a spear. He was a humane man, and a considerable loss to the district he governed.

Hostilities immediately commenced. The remainder of the Cape regiment, several detachments of Europeans, including dragoons and two pieces of artillery, were ordered up to Graaf Reynett, and there joined by nearly 1200 farmers and their servants, considered the best rifle-men in the world. This formidable body set out in quest of the enemy, expecting to conclude its labours in a few days. Various difficulties, however, occurred, which required both talents and perseverance to conquer. The artillery were soon left behind. The boors likewise, though accustomed to this mode of life from their infancy, speedily returned home, leaving the war and its hardships to the soldiers; nor was it till after four months of great fatigue and privations, arising from the mode of warfare, the intricacies of the country, and the ever-changing haunts of the enemy, that they were finally driven across Rio D'Infanta, beyond which river we have, at present, no claim or inducement to penetrate.

Several Hottentots, it appears, possessed of fire-arms, assisted the Kaffres, but no regular stand was ever attempted against our troops. Concealment, ambushes, and continual change of quarters, being the usual modes of savage warfare, so that the difficulty was not to beat but to find them. Their usual weapons, which are arrows and assagayes, or spears, are thrown from behind trees and thickets, with great force and dexterity, small objects being frequently struck with the spear at sixty yards distance. Like the majority of

people in a state of nature, they care little about life. Courage compensates the want of every other virtue. They defend themselves valiantly, and never think of submitting while able to act offensively.

Several women and children, who occasionally fell into our hands, were sent back the first opportunity: the former were universally robust and well-featured, perfectly free in their manners, and what appeared rather remarkable, not at all alarmed at coming into possession of the whites. Vast quantities of Indian and Kaffre corn were found standing in the districts they had occupied, extending over plains as far as the eye could reach. Cattle were likewise numerous. A narrative of this expedition would not only be interesting, but probably add something to our knowledge of a region rarely penetrated by Europeans. Some of the officers whom I have seen, represent the face of the country as superior to what is commonly believed. Many of their routes were new; added to which, constant excursions in search of game and water afforded opportunities of collecting several interesting facts.

To prevent, as much as possible, future incursions, a chain of small posts is now established along the right bank of Rio D'Infanta, which here becomes the colonial boundary, and others in the rear support these. Algoa Bay, through which all supplies are forwarded from the Cape, likewise contains a detachment. The principal station, however, is Graham's Town, named after the Colonel of the Cape regiment, of which it forms the head-quarters, containing sixty or seventy huts, situated not far from the Zure Veldt, about 80 miles beyond the line of farms, and nearly 130 from Algoa Bay.

European detachments, relieved every twelve or eighteen months, accompany this corps, which is now made stationary on the frontier. Married officers have their families here, thus imparting to it the first traces of civilization; and several, in fact, both married and single, have been so well pleased with their situation, as to grieve at being recalled. Relieved from the expence and fatigue of dress and visitors, the ladies find amusement in the performance of the most homely domestic duties, while the gentlemen, accoutred in shooting-dresses made from the skins of wild beasts, pursue living prey in the clothing of the dead. This is, doubtless, the age of wonders; and it will not be one of the least, to see our fair countrywomen, formed to adorn the circles of gaiety and elegance in Europe, found a colony in the wilds of Africa, amid the haunts of all the savage beasts of the forest, and of more savage men. May their efforts succeed!

Among the natives of this division of Africa may be mentioned a singular race, named Bosjesmans, or, as they are commonly called, in conversation, *Boschmen*, differing in appearance and characteristics from any other with which we are acquainted. They are represented as of diminutive figure, seldom reaching five feet in height, their habits unsociable, their mode of life wandering and idle, cultivating little or nothing, dependant on chance for casual supplies of wretched food, possessing no property, and nearly ignorant of the simple elementary knowledge of human beings.

Such is their general character, sketched by the colonists, though doubtless, in some respects, overcharged; they are however, a wretched race, between whom and the boors there formerly existed a deadly antipathy, sharpened by mutual aggressions and cruelties; the whites, with a superstitious feeling of dislike, attributing all their losses, mishaps, and disappointments to the agency of "Boschmen," and the latter, with more reason, considering their adversaries as the demons of persecution and misfortune. Some of these prejudices are now done away, many of this miserable race finding employment among the farmers as servants, and are said to be active and intelligent. In a private family in town, I have seen what was called a Bosch-woman—whether justly or not I cannot tell; she was represented to have come from a family in the interior, where her parents were servants, and seemed to me merely a young Hottentot, of lower stature than ordinary. But it is remarkable, and deserves notice from those who speculate on the origin of the different races of mankind, that while the eastern and western shores of Africa are lined with nations of negroes, possessing few distinctive features of character, its southern division should present such marked differences as appear in the three races of Kaffre, Hottentot, and Bosjesman.

The trade of the colony is very confined; some intercourse exists with Brazils and Mauritius, besides the connection with England; and, when we first arrived, the activity of the Americans threatened to engross the import trade to themselves, till an interdict from Europe put a stop to their further enterprize here. The principal imports are British manufactures, to the amount of nearly £150,000 annually; the exports of a little whale-oil, wine, skins, ostrich-feathers, dried fruits, and a few other trifling things, all, however, of no material importance. The scarcity of returns is remarkable; bills upon England, of course, bear a high premium; but the merchant in return reimburses himself by advancing the price of his goods. Prize-goods fitted for the home-market, for this reason, sometimes sell well; but in no part of the world is *prize-money*

so diligently sifted—so that very little finds its way into the pockets of the captors. Traders are supposed to be never less than £90,000 in debt to their correspondents in England. On the whole, the slight importance of the Cape, in a commercial point of view, is singular, and scarcely to be explained, except it be by the operation of the restrictions imposed by the charter of the East-India Company. The produce of the custom-house, for the last two or three years, has averaged about £14,000 per annum.

The revenues arise from vendues, excise, transfers of landed property, banks, licenses, customs, fines, and occasional sources, amounting altogether to 720,000 rix-dollars, or about £110,000, at the present rate of exchange. This sum, which has been annually increasing, exceeds the ordinary expenditure, paying the civil establishment, the Cape regiment, and, after deducting considerable sums for public works, leaving a surplus of 100,000 dollars. This might be expended with infinite advantage upon the public roads, most of which, at a distance from the capital, are in a wretched condition.

Salaries and pensions to public officers absorb 420,000 dollars of the revenue, including the income of the governor, which amounts to £21,000 per annum. The ordinary expence of the Cape regiment of 500 men does not exceed 170,000 dollars. The extraordinaries of the European garrison, at present consisting of more than 3000 men, are about £11,000 per month, and their pay about £6000 more; of the naval expenditure it is difficult to gain any precise knowledge.

The population of Cape Town consists of about 6000 whites and 12,000 slaves, Hottentots, and free people of colour, making, with the garrison, more than 20,000 persons; but lately there have been several departures for the interior. A new square has been formed without the castle-gate, intended for the reception of the more bulky articles which pay duty. Several buildings, meant for the court of justice, post, printing, and public secretary's offices, are drawn out for erection, near the entrance to Government Gardens. The Lutheran church in Strand-street, so much injured by the earthquake, has been lately repaired, at an expence of nearly £5000, by an individual who holds the license for retailing wine and spirits, so that the trade would seem fully as profitable here as in our own country.

A plan is likewise in agitation to supply the houses with water by means of iron-pipes, instead of requiring, as at present, the almost constant labour of a slave, in each family, to drag it from the public pump. But though the pipes are arrived, the measure is delayed in consequence of the burgher

senate, which regulates these matters, wishing to throw the whole expence upon England, though intended solely for the accommodation of themselves and neighbours—a very prudent measure, no doubt, if they can only effect it.

The climate, as already remarked, is delightful; in summer the thermometer ranges between 70° and 80°; but the dust, driven about by high south-east winds, is extremely annoying—mouth, eyes, nose, and ears, being literally stuffed with it—and penetrating, notwithstanding every precaution, to the inmost recesses of the houses. Rain during the winter-months, from May till October, falls in considerable quantities; vicissitudes are frequent; and the evenings and mornings sometimes pretty sharp, which goes off as the day advances.

The effect of the south-east wind on Table Mountain is well known under the name of the table-cloth. This cloud, or rather assemblage of small clouds, resembles those woolly-like masses we sometimes see in the sky, except that they are always in motion, and more immediately under the eye; they roll down the sides of the mountain in distinct yet intermixed masses to a certain depth, and as quickly re-ascend, thus keeping up a continual and rapid circulation of vapour. When the cloth is considered perfect, the wind is commonly high.

South-easters frequently come on suddenly towards evening, bursting over the hills and through the gap, termed Devil's Kloof, down into the bay, with an ardour very justly termed fiery, frequently upsetting boats under sail, and driving ships to sea; this happened to the Nisus when last there, nor did she succeed in regaining the anchorage for a week. Some of the older residents fancy they can discern the approach of a south-easter, by observing the summit of blew-berg on the opposite shore of the bay, from which it is supposed to shift suddenly round; and from the mouth of the bay it may be distinguished approaching at a considerable distance, by the curl on the surface of the water.

Notwithstanding the beauty of the climate, few instances occur of longevity, which is generally attributed to gross living and indolent habits; but so far as my own experience extends, there are peculiarities in it not yet explained. Apoplexy, dropsy, gout, rheumatism, are the prevailing diseases, assisted by occasional colds, consumptions, and bowel-complaints; and it is remarkable, that the catarrh, or influenza, lately experienced on-board, near the island of St. Paul, prevailed likewise here at the same time, though so far distant. Deaths give rise to a curious custom in our eyes—I mean that of formally advertising them in the "Gazette," requesting to be excused visits of condolence, which no doubt saves a profusion of un-

meaning words, and long faces made up for the occasion, and often merely a mockery of woe.

" The peninsula of the Cape of Good Hope* is a mountainous ridge, stretching nearly north and south for thirty or forty miles, and connected on the east side, and near its northern extremity, with the main body of Africa, by a flat sandy isthmus, about ten miles broad, having Table Bay on the north of it, and False Bay on the south. The southern extremity of this peninsula, extending into the sea, with False Bay on the east, and the ocean on the south and west, is properly the Cape of Good Hope, and is the most southern point of Africa. At this point, the chain of mountains which forms the peninsula, though rugged, is lower than at the north end, where it is terminated by Table Mountain and two others, which form an amphitheatre over-looking Table Bay, and opening to the north. The mountains of the ridge extending from the Cape to the termination of the peninsula on the north, vary in shape; but the most frequent forms incline more or less to sharp conical. The three mountains which terminate the peninsula on the north, are, the Table Mountain in the middle; the Lion's Head, sometimes called the Sugar Loaf, on the west side; and the Devil's Peak on the east. The Lion's Head, which is about 2100 feet above the level of the sea, is separated from the Table Mountain by a valley, that descends to the depth of 1500 or 2000 feet below the summit of the Table Mountain, which is itself 3582 above the level of the sea. On the west of the Lion's Head there is a lower eminence, named the Lion's Rump, from which the ground declines gradually to the sea. The amphitheatre, formed by these three mountains, is about five or six miles in diameter, in the centre of which is placed Cape Town.

" The rocks of which the peninsula is composed are few in number, and of simple structure. They are granite, gneiss, clay-slate, sandstone and greenstone. Of these the most abundant are sandstone and granite; the next, in frequency, are clay-slate and gneiss; and the rarest is greenstone. The strata in general have a direction from E. to W. that is, across the peninsula. The southern and middle parts of the peninsula have been very imperfectly examined. Captain Basil Hall, in an interesting account of some mineralogical appearances he observed near Cape Town, published in the Edinburgh Philo-

* This account, to page 21, of the Geognosy of the Cape of Good Hope has lately been published, by Professor JAMIESON, in the EDINBURGH TRANSACTIONS, and appears to the author to merit transcript in this place.

sophical Transactions, remarks, that the same general structure and relations seem to occur all over the peninsula as in the mountains around Cape Town. More lately Captain Wauchope, an active and enterprising officer, pointed out to Mr. Clarke Able a fine display of stratification in a mountain that faces the sea, in the neighbourhood of Simon's Bay. The following is the description, as given by Mr. Able: "The sandstone, forming the upper part of the mountain, is of a reddish colour, very crystalline in its structure, and approaching in some specimens, to quartz rock. Immediately beneath the sandstone is a bed of compact dark red argillaceous sandstone, passing, in many places, into slate of the same colour. This bed rests upon another of very coarse loosely-combined sandstone, resembling gravel. Under this is another layer of dark red sandstone, terminating in a conglomerate, consisting of decomposed crystals of felspar, and of rounded and angular fragments of quartz, from the size of a millet-seed to that of a plover's egg imbeded in a red sandstone base. Beneath the conglomerate commences a bed, which I at first took for granite, and which is composed of the constituents of granite in a decomposed state, intermixed with green steatite, and a sufficient quantity of the dark red sandstone to give it a reddish hue. The felspar of the bed is decomposed, and exactly resemble that of the conglomerate above it. The mica seems, in a good measure, to have passed into steatite. The quartz is in small crystals, frequently having their angles rounded. This bed is several feet in thickness, and gradually terminates in the granite; but the precise line of junction I was unable to trace. The appearances, then, were in the following order:

1. Horizontally stratified sandstone.
2. Bed of compact dark red sandstone, passing into slate.
3. A bed of coarser sandstone, resembling gravel.
4. A second layer of compact dark red sandstone, passing
5. Into a conglomerate, consisting of decomposed crystals of felspar, and fragments of quartz in a sandstone basis.
6. A bed composed of the decomposed constituents of granite and red sandstone, passing
7. Into granite.'

"The above is the only spot to the southward of the range of mountains near Cape Town, which has been particularly described. To the northward of Cape Town, it is reported that the mountains are principally composed of the same rocks as those which occur throughout the peninsula, and whose characters and position have been examined with considerable attention in the Lion's Rump, Lion's Head, Table Moun-

tain, and Devil's Peak. As these mountains give a good general idea of the composition and structure of the whole peninsula, and also of much of southern Africa, we shall now present our readers with a concise description of them, drawn up from information communicated to us by Dr. Adam of Calcutta, and from the published accounts of Captain Hall and Mr. Clarke Abel.

"The *Lion's Rump* rises by an easy ascent, and, excepting at one or two points, is covered to the summit with a thin soil, bearing a scanty vegetation.

"It is composed of clay-slate, and sandstone. The sandstone rests upon the slate. The clay-slate is distinctly stratified; the strata on one side of the hill dip to the north, on the opposite to the south, and in the middle or centre of the hill they are nearly perpendicular. Numerous veins of compact quartz traverse the slate in all directions. A quarry, which has been wrought to considerable extent on the east-side of the Lion's Rump, affords a fine view of the structure of the clay-slate, and in one place there is a bed of sandstone in the slate. The sandstone, which is of a yellowish-grey colour, is composed of grains of quartz, with disseminated felspar and scales of mica.

"The strata of clay-slate continue to the base of the Lion's Head. Here they are succeeded by strata of compact gneiss, which is composed of grey felspar and quartz, with much dark brown mica in small scales. The gneiss is distinctly stratified, and the strata in some places dip under the next rock, which is granite; in others they dip from it. Numerous transitions are to be observed from the gneiss into the granite, and in the same bed of compact gneiss, one part will be gneiss and another granite. Portions of granite of various sizes are imbedded in the gneiss, and numerous blocks of gneiss, varying much in size, are imbedded in the granite. Sometimes the imbedded portions of granite and gneiss are distinctly separated from the surrounding rock; in other instances they are much intermixed at their line of junction, and veins shoot from the imbedded portions of granite into the surrounding gneiss. Beds of granite appear in some places to alternate with the compact gneiss, Veins of granite, varying from a few inches to several feet in width, traverse the gneiss, and are to be observed shooting from the granite, or are contained in the gneiss, and do not appear to have any connection with beds or masses of granite. Granite forms a considerable portion of the Lion's Head. It is a compound of pale red felspar, grey quartz, and brownish-black mica. It is more frequently coarse granular than fine granular, and is often porphyritic. It is occasionally traversed by veins of quartz, or of felspar, or of granite. It does not ap-

pear to be distinctly stratified in any part of the mountain. In some parts the granite is intersected by veins of greenstone, and one of these veins is rather remarkable, as it appears divided and shifted. As we ascend the mountain, we find the granite succeeded first by a reddish sandstone, and this in its turn is covered by a brown sandstone that reaches to the summit. These sandstones are principally composed of granular concretions of quartz, with a few disseminated grains of felspar, and scales of mica. The sandstone is distinctly stratified, and the strata dip under a small angle, all around the Lion's Head, and the north-west side of Table Mountain. On the opposite side of the latter, however, from the sea-beach, we may see it beyond the gorges, making an angle with the horizon of not less than 45°. Dr. Adam remarks: 'During a ride to Constantia one day, I observed this high inclination more particularly, on the ridge extending from the Devil's Peak by Simon's Bay; and having afterwards visited the spot on purpose, found the sandstone very much elevated in its position above the common level of the strata, and at one place nearly perpendicular to the horizon, running from north-west to south-east.'

"The next and highest mountain, the *Table Mountain*, presents many interesting mineralogical appearances. The lowest part of the mountain, on one side, is red sandstone; higher up, and apparently rising from under it, are clay-slate and gneiss. These rocks are disposed in strata nearly vertical, with an east and west direction. They alternate with granite, which is the next rock in the ascent of the mountain. The granite, at its line of junction with the gneiss and clay-slate, is often much intermixed with them; and numerous veins of granite shoot from the mass of the rock itself into the bounding strata, and cotemporaneous portions of granite are seen enclosed in the gneiss, and of gneiss in the granite. At a higher level than the granite, sandstone makes its appearance, and continues to the summit of the mountain. The lowest sandstone is of a red colour, the next is of a yellowish colour; and the upper part, or that on the summit, of a greyish colour, and sometimes so coarsely granular, as to appear in the state of conclomerate. In many places, the sandstone passes into quartz-rock.

"The most easterly mountain of the groupe, named the *Devil's Peak*, agrees with Table Mountain in the nature and arrangement of the rocks of which it is composed. The lower part of the mountain exhibits strata of clay-slate; these, as we ascend, are succeeded by granite, and the upper parts and summit are of the usual varieties of sandstone.

"In short, the mountains and hills of the peninsula of the Cape of Good Hope, are to be considered as variously aggregated compounds of quartz, felspar, and mica, and the whole as the result of one nearly simultaneous process of crystallization. This view affords a plausible explanation of all the varieties of aggregation, structure, position, and transitions, observed in the rocks of this part of Africa."

The figure of the native ladies is commonly delicate and well-shaped, possessing none of the reputed clumsiness of their progenitors from Holland. An amateur in the "science of fine forms," would have been gratified by the display at the last birth-night ball at Government-house, where, from the number of visitors and confined nature of the apartments, the squeeze was perfectly fashionable, although it was impossible not to feel for the fatigues of the kind host and hostess, Sir John and Lady Theodosia Cradock. English country-dancing, and English dress, are all the rage; waltzing, in conformity to English opinions, being confined to private parties. In the heat and thirst occasioned by a ball-room, they have recourse to milk and warm-water only—never to negus. Marked abstemiousness in this respect among the females here prevails, indeed, on all occasions.

The police is good, and, if this be any recommendation, handsomely dressed; for, being equipped in green or blue, covered with buttons, and swaggering about with sabres clattering on the ground, the mistake of strangers, "What rifle regiment have you here?" will not seem strange. Crimes, considering the population, are very few;—another indubitable proof, if any were wanting, of the mild and humane sway of the whites; for slavery has within itself such a tendency to engender crime, that exemption from it in this class is the very highest testimony to the conduct of their masters.

The chief of the police is the Fiscal, at present filled by an able and upright man, Mr. Truter. This officer besides, as chief magistrate, having the care of the prison and deciding petty causes, is likewise public prosecutor. Affairs of moment go before the Court of Justice, whose decision may be amended by the Court of Appeals. Some of our countrymen, in litigation with the natives, complain of undue partiality. This was one of the first things I heard, on arriving here two years ago; but, judging from observation, I believe it totally unfounded, the charge arising probably from our rooted dislike to all foreign tribunals.

The torture, as in other Dutch colonies, existed here till our arrival. Capital punishments rarely occurred. Robbery and forgery were more commonly requited by transportation

to Robin Island, for fourteen years, or for life, a decision fully sufficient for the substantial purposes of justice; for the Dutch, notwithstanding some traits of vindictive character, have not yet descended to write their criminal laws in the blood of the victims, as we do in humane and enlightened England.

This village having no amusements, or variety of scene, appears to us intolerably dull; for the life of a naval officer, on his usual element, is of itself so monotonous and vapid, except when there is some immediate object in view, that he anxiously looks to harbour for relaxation, naturally enough feeling all the horrors of a "dead-and-alive place," more than most other men. The army, however, complain quite as much as ourselves, when, by the routine of duty, called hither. Our relief is a ride to Cape-Town, to an amateur-play, or a society-ball. Foot-racing has been another occupation. A few plays, likewise, have been got up in the flag-ship (Lion, of 64 guns,) which, assisted by a tolerable band, pass away an evening. I contributed my mite in a prologue. To the family of John Osmond, Esq. and his friends, we stand much indebted: besides which, there are only two or three others here of respectability.

Within this fortnight we have been much interested by the appearance of an ambassador from the king of the Comoro islands, a group situated to the north-east of Madagascar, who arrived in the Eclipse brig-of-war, which picked him up at the Portuguese settlement of Mosambique. His sable excellency calls himself *Bombay Jack*, by which name it appears he is well known to the English Indiamen touching at the Isle of Johanna, one of the cluster, for refreshments, when on their way to India. He dresses in the Moorish style—long flowing robes, slippers, and turban; is of a dark mahogany colour, seems about forty-five years of age, speaks English intelligibly, and, from what we can see, displays much shrewdness of remark, and more knowledge of the world than could possibly be expected.

The object of his mission is understood to be, to request protection from the government here, against piratical expeditions undertaken by the people of Madagascar against his native islands, which, it appears, have been carried on for many years to a great extent, the country being every where laid waste, and the people carried into slavery. This assistance will, no doubt, be afforded. Johanna supplies us with wood, water, and refreshments. The natives, who are said to be peculiarly inoffensive, profess the warmest attachment to the English, and therefore deserve some good offices at our hands. This may be effectually done by a single brig-of-war,

two of which are usually stationed at Mauritius, without difficulty or expence, by an occasional run to Madagascar, and threatening the chiefs with the severest retaliation upon all caught in these predatory expeditions, which, it seems, are undertaken from the mere spirit of plunder, without any provocation from the harmless Johannese. Should a frigate, however, be thought necessary, I hope the Nisus will be ordered over this interesting ground. We have nothing else, indeed, to do; for there are no longer any enemies at sea in this quarter of the globe. Naval business is at a stand—"Othello's occupation's o'er." And should nothing new turn up, you may, perhaps, hear of a mortality in the fleet, produced by *ennui*.

Mosambique, Aug. 20, 1812.

We quitted Simon's Bay July 23. The weather was fine, the season favourable for a passage to the place, and continues so from April to the end of August. This coast was first visited by the enterprize of Vasco de Gama, and has so few attractions for mariners, that it is still imperfectly known. It is low, destitute of vegetation, and faced with sand-hills, having higher land behind. Few places are more repulsive, for a heavy surf, breaking on the beach, threatens instant death to whoever is thrown upon its shores. There are no harbours in the colonial territory, but three roadsteads or bays—Mossel, Plettenberg, and Algoa, the two ormer named by the Dutch, the latter by the Portuguese. They are all insecure for shipping. The Doddington Indiaman was lost on a small island at the entrance of Algoa Bay. The Grosvenor suffered a similar fate not far distant, and the sufferings of the survivors afford a melancholy tale. Some government-transports have also been wrecked at a later period. Plettenberg Bay is resorted to, the timber lining its shores, some of which is said to be excellent for naval purposes, now much wanted in the colony, could it be floated to the place of embarkation. Colonial vessels never proceed further than Algoa Bay, through which the troops on the frontiers receive supplies. Rio D'Infanta, the boundary of the colony, falls into the sea, in a fine stream, something more than forty miles farther to the northward, in about lat 33° 28′ S.

The country, called *Natal*, from being discovered on Christmas-day, succeeds to the colonial territory. It has a small river and creek, each bearing the same name. The next division of the coast is named *Fumas*, from the quantity of smoke first observed on its shores, and the appellation is continued till we meet with the spacious bay of Delagoa. It should be observed, there is no authority whatever for these arbitrary

arrangements of territory; they have descended from time immemorial to map and chart-makers, without alteration, or the slightest attempts at gaining authentic information respecting their native names. The present were given by the first discoverers, and, notwithstanding the progress of science and discovery, this country remains, in 1812, in that happy and profound state of obscurity in which it was found by Vasco de Gama in 1497.

Delagoa Bay has been often visited by trading vessels on this coast; but their stay has been either too short, or their means and pursuits unsuited to gain accurate knowledge of the country or the neighbouring tribes. It is large, and is said to have good anchorage for vessels. In the spawning season it is frequented by great numbers of the black whale, which, though not the most profitable species, compensates the fisherman by its numbers. Ships engaged in the fishery visit almost all the bays and creeks of the coast, and sometimes nearly complete their cargoes at their anchors, without labour or anxiety. A small vessel, detached from the Cape, with one or two intelligent men, might gain every requisite degree of information respecting the coast, without much expence to government.

The next considerable promontory is Cape Corrientes, or currents, from the strength with which they prevail here, situated about 200 miles beyond Delagoa Bay. The next is Cape St. Sebastian, in 22° 36′ south. We descried it in the evening, though partly obscured by haze, apparently a bluff point of land, connected with a low sandy beach, extending to the eastward by a point. Between these capes, and not far from the former, is the river and town of Inhambana, the most southern settlement of the Portuguese, whose authority or influence extend no farther, though they claim the country as far as Delagoa Bay. The French made an attempt on this settlement about four years ago, but were compelled by the natives to retire. The territory called Inhambana is extensive, producing slaves and ivory, besides a considerable quantity of grain. The authority of the Portuguese extends only a few miles from the coast. The natives are stated to be remarkably bold and warlike, but, on the borders, said by the Portuguese to add extreme treachery and cruelty to their courage. A Portuguese resident, protected by a few black soldiers, lives in the town, situated a few miles up the river, and transacts the commercial affairs of his countrymen, and others, besides being the responsible agent of government. Strangers, indeed, are carefully excluded from trading at any of the minor settlements on this coast, by strict orders from Mosambique; but they are, in general, so much in want of

every article from Europe, and the temptation of gain is so irresistible, that a bribe secures every privilege.

On the succeeding day we had a distant view of the Bazaruto Islands, but, in so large a vessel as the Nisus, did not venture near their shores, which seem well guarded by rocks. Like many other spots in the vicinity, they partake largely of the sublime, by being involved in utter obscurity. The imagination may have ample scope, without fear of contradiction. All we can learn is, that they are small, partly inhabited, and not much frequented by the Portuguese. They lie directly opposite the famed coast of Sofala, the distance to which, however, is more considerable than usually represented in our charts, from the coast of the main forming a deep bay.

The countries termed in our maps Sabia and Sofala, are known to the Portuguese, who are the only Europeans acquainted with them, by the latter name only. The coast is low, and in some places unhealthy: the interior woody and difficult of access, and travelling impracticable, though the authority of the whites is generally acknowledged. One or two small settlements on the coast have residents, supported by soldiers, appointed by the governor of Mosambique, for the regulation of trade. The Portuguese dare not venture far from their own immediate territory, the real traders in the inland parts being people of colour, born in the vicinity of the white settlements, or natives whose nation and language are, perhaps, but little known, who come from a great distance, and return after the disposal of their merchandize, though intestine wars render even this communication precarious. Some antiquarian truants, particularly Bruce, the celebrated traveller, have conjectured Sofala to be the golden *Ophir* of the Hebrews. If this be correct, it has undergone a sad transmutation; but this seems not at all probable, and is, in fact, only one of those wild conjectures, or misrepresentations, often substituted by his enthusiastic imagination for sober facts. He often stands in a singular predicament with the reader. He tells some truths that appear improbable, and relates many probabilities that are utterly destitute of truth.

Sofala has also a resident, protected by a few black troops and a small fort, against any commotion of the natives: but this is rarely the case. Slaves, ivory, gold-dust, and rice, are annually exported to Mosambique. The port is difficult of access to vessels of burden, on account of sand-banks; the trade, therefore, is confined to small vessels. Refreshments are also difficult to procure, and from these reasons, ships passing through the channel, bound to India, never approach this shore, so that several of the small ports on the coast are

less known than might be expected. Captain Fisher, in his majesty's sloop *Racehorse*, attempted to ascertain the entrance to Sofala, in 1809, but failed, though a boat was dispatched for that purpose. The voyage, however, had other objects, which would not admit of delay. A small vessel from India, which visited this coast on a trading voyage some years ago, ascertained it to be in lat 20° 15′ S. long. 34° 45′ E. A river of some importance extends a considerable distance into the country, on one of the banks of which is situated the village, a poor miserable place, distant about four hundred miles from Mosambique. A guard of soldiers is immediately placed onboard strange vessels, to prevent any trading intercourse with the settlers; but this restriction is commonly very soon removed, by the proper use of golden arguments. An Englishman, however, is always an object of dread to the Portuguese on this coast, his ideas being supposed to be filled with plans, and his actions pregnant with designs against their commerce. Sometimes English vessels, in distress, have been refused assistance; others occasionally driven off the coast by force; so that, were it not for the more powerful motive of individual gain, they would be, perhaps, formally interdicted.

But the most interesting object on the coast is, the great river Zambezi, falling into the sea, by two or three mouths, about one hundred and thirty miles nearer to Mosambique. From the few slight notices we have been able to procure at this place it is said, on the authority of some natives, to arise from an inland lake situated between seven and eight hundred miles from the sea. Of this, about six hundred miles have been explored by the Portuguese: but the difficulties of the navigation are considerable, and the route on the banks altogether impracticable from the hostility of the natives. The course to the sea is likewise tortuous, so that the length is materially increased. It runs, however, in a wide stream, intersected here and there by islands, till within eighty miles of the coast, when it divides into two, a large branch going off to the southward, which, though formerly of importance, is now little frequented, on account of obstructions to the navigation. From this bifurcation of the river, the northern branch takes the name of Quilimaney, the southern Luabo or Cumana. The principal mouth is the Quilimaney, forty miles farther to the northward than Cumana. It is nearly two miles broad at the entrance, and though confined by a bar of sand, has deep water and good anchorage for ships of burthen within. Between these are two or three smaller mouths, one of which is named Demana, but neither of any consequence. The land near the mouths of the Zambezi is not very high, possessing,

however, more wood and less sand than at most other parts of the coast. The mouth of the Quilimaney is in about 18° 12′ S. latitude. Vasco de Gama anchoring here on his voyage to India, became highly pleased with the appearance of the country, the river also very justly attracting so much attention as to become a theme of admiration to successive missionaries and conquerors sent to disturb and destroy the unfortunate natives. Several great kingdoms have been described by the early writers, as existing on its banks; some extending to the southward and westward, having cities, armies, riches, and many horrible customs, which are duly related for the edification and wonder of those that chuse to believe them. Some of these stories, I am told, are retailed by the writers of the Universal History, which you may refer to, but I have it not at present within my reach. Fables, however, at this early period, were not confined to books of fiction; as along with some valuable information, few works have disseminated more untruths than those of the early fathers, who, proud of their knowledge, and fond of the marvellous, were desirous of exalting the difficulty and importance of their exertions. Detached tribes, or small bodies of natives, indeed, abound on every part of the coast; but no nation, formidable by its numbers or civilization, to answer the descriptions of the ancient writers, respecting the empires of Monomotapa, Mogaranga, and others. A prince, however, of some power, occupies the country termed Sabia in the maps. His territories are said to be considerable, extending into the interior nearly due-west; but no precise information respecting them has been gained.

The Zambezi is still more remarkable for having on its banks the large trading town of *Sena*, or Sana, forming a very important depôt for the inland commerce of Eastern Africa, and, till lately, scarcely known to us even by name. The only Englishmen who ever penetrated thus far, were, I believe, two officers of the Winterton Indiaman, wrecked in the Mosambique channel, in 1792, who visited all the Portuguese settlements in order to procure assistance. Their narrative I have not seen, but they had to proceed from Sofala to Sena. It is said to be a considerable town, well inhabited, protected by some works and native soldiers, and having a governor, second only to that of Mosambique. The Portuguese factory here is considerable, and its connections extensive, particularly to the southward. All the subordinate agents, it appears, are people of colour, though the country also, for many miles round, acknowledges the sway of the Europeans. To this mart the native traders, from the interior, repair in July, August, and September, with slaves, ivory, gold-dust, and me-

dicinal herbs, gums, and roots, taking back in return woollen and cotton cloths, rude trinkets of various species, hard-ware, fire-arms, powder and shot. A few, more familiar with Europeans, venture down the Zambezi, and reach Mosambique in October, in the coasting vessels that annually arrive at this period from all the settlements. Here they sometimes find a better market for their merchandize, and indulge their curiosity, returning again when the monsoon becomes favourable.

There are also two or three minor establishments on the river, even beyond Sena, but of no material importance. The banks of the Zambezi are not altogether in the possession of either Portuguese or natives, but divided between them, some parts of both northern and southern sides acknowledging one party, some the other. The Portuguese limits, therefore, are not easily defined, but seem scattered in detached districts, rather than concentrated into one connected tract of country. Sena is about 250 miles from the mouth of the Quilimaney, and is said to be in about 17° 40′ S. No land communication exists between them, on account of woods and deserts. The navigation occupies about twenty days; and between Sofala and Sena much of the country is desert and uninhabited. It is by means of the Zambezi and Sena alone, that any material intercourse takes place between this coast and the interior. All the other channels become gradually impervious at a short distance from the sea, either from natural obstacles, or the hostility of the natives, and could we therefore allay the irritable jealousy of the Portuguese, and procure their sanction, it would form an advantageous point from which a traveller might set out for the interior of this great continent.

From the Quilimaney to Mosambique, the coast takes the general name of the latter, though little, or not at all, known to us; but having some small settlements, a few streams, and a group of islands, called Angoxa, which are visited by all the coasting vessels that pass. The rivers are named Quizungo, Angoxa, Mogincal, Mocamba, and others. Numerous sand-banks, situated at a short distance from the main, leave a channel between of considerable breadth and depth, in which coasters may navigate, tolerably well sheltered from storms. Against enemies it is more difficult to guard; for a small vessel placed here would cut off all the coasting trade of Mosambique, as actually happened a few years ago by means of a petty privateer from Mauritius. These insults arise from the happy inactivity of the people, who would sooner submit to be blockaded by a few canoes filled with savages, than disturb their ease by the clamour of guns, or any rude preparations for war. The atmosphere of the place is any thing but

heroic, for though first founded by heroes, their spirit has long ceased to actuate the present inhabitants.

The sand-banks extend in almost an unbroken line, except in a few places, from the Bazaruto Islands to Cape Delgado, in 10° 15′ S. latitude; the creeks and mouths of small rivers, affording security to coasters, are numerous. It is remarkable that the eastern coast, between Algoa Bay and Mosambique, is remarkably well watered, while southern Africa is generally labouring under great deficiency of irrigation; the western shore, from the Cape as far as 20° south, is equally unfortunate. This is still more singular from the higher elevation of the land, the general direction of the mountains to the westward, and the lower degree of temperature in the southern parts, which would seem to counteract any very extensive evaporation in the latter regions. Almost all the rivers on this coast are obstructed by bars; vessels of very considerable burden, therefore, cannot anchor; but Sofala and Quilimaney admit those drawing fourteen feet water, though this is rarely attempted. Some others have more than twice this depth within the bar, and are navigable for a few miles inland.

I had almost omitted to say we received on-board the Johannese minister for a passage to his native island. The English name of this amiable old man I have already mentioned; his native, or country name, as he terms it, is Barra Comba. He is about fifty years of age, lively and good-humoured, has a penetrating eye, and expressive countenance; his figure is petit, his features of the best cast of the Arabian, quick and intelligent, mixed with much unaffected simplicity and goodness of heart. He speaks English tolerably well, understands something of our character, and displays much shrewdness in his remarks on places, persons, and manners. He is also excessively diffident and unassuming; seems grateful for the smallest attention, and frequently says we are much too good —too kind, to an "*oid useless black man.*"

On coming on-board he had his choice of living in any part of the ship, or with whom he thought proper; but declined frequenting the officer's table. He is aware, it seems, of the prejudices of the lower order of Europeans against persons of his colour, and therefore concludes his presence will be disagreeable. This idea we have tried to conquer, but without effect; he cannot be persuaded that the society of an "old black man" is not in our estimation degrading, though politeness may induce us to assert the contrary; he is equally punctilious with Captain Beaver. This refinement, or delicacy, surprised us, considering the limited acquaintance with our manners; but it was at once a proof of an ingenuous mind,

and, added to a variety of other little traits of character, has raised him much in our opinions. He is a strict Mahometan, though without any of the fanaticisms of the Moors; his servants kill our stock according to the laws of Mahomet, so that they are all enabled to partake without violating any religious principle; and our guest, therefore, lives as he pleases, sometimes taking coffee with us, but rarely making any stay.

The channel we have been partly exploring divides the great island of Madagascar from the continent, washing the western shore of the former, and that part of the latter known by the name of Mosambique, from which it derives its name. It is familiar to navigators bound to India, by affording a more speedy passage during particular periods. Vessels also employed on whaling voyages visit it occasionally with great success; during our progress we saw great numbers of that valuable fish. Water-spouts seemed numerous; I counted four at one time, within two miles of the ship; several persons with whom I have conversed have also remarked the frequency of this phenomenon here.

The breadth of the channel, opposite this settlement, is about 280 miles. The Madagascar shore is tolerably high; that of Mosambique, on the contrary, low; the depth is very considerable, it being impossible in many places to get soundings close to the shore. Admitting the probability of the channel having been originally formed by an irruption of the sea, the extraordinary currents that prevail might have increased it to its present size. A theorist may also call in the agency of fire, as one or two mountains that throw out smoke are said to exist about sixty miles from the coast; but this is a subject which may, perhaps, on investigation, amuse some of the leisure hours of the Plutonists and Neptunists, as I am sure you will excuse me the discussion at present.

Several dangers lie off the Madagascar shore, and several huge masses of rock, scattered here and there, seem to remain perpetual mementos of former connection with the island. Few navigators at present frequent it, though St. Augustine's Bay was formerly visited by men-of-war for wood and water, and Lord Keith's fleet called here for refreshments, on their voyage to India, after the capture of the Cape of Good Hope in 1795.

On the morning (19th) we stood in toward the mouth of the river Mocamba, and had a good view of a low woody shore, the trees being almost wholly of the palm species, and in a few hours descried Mosambique. It is in general first distinguished by the vicinity of a hill called the Table, and occasionally by Pao Mountain, so called from some resemblance to

the shape of the foot; but the entrance is sometimes difficult to discover, on account of being guarded by small islands, called after some of the Catholic Saints; the ship, however, being descried from the settlement, a fine-looking, turbaned Moor came on-board as chief pilot, and passing St. George's Island to the right, ran close under the walls of the grand fort, apparently a strong place, anchoring within something less than a mile of the town. Mutual civilities and visits of ceremony took place in the course of the day.

Mosambique, August 21.

Mosambique appearing to De Gama, the discoverer, well calculated for the site of a colony, was first settled by some of his immediate successors, on account of its central situation and harbour, about the year 1510. The fort, which was then erected, still exists a noble memento of what the people were; a governor was also appointed subservient to the ruling authorities in India. Mosambique was intended for the focus of all the Portuguese conquests, trade, and colonies in eastern Africa, for the nation had become master of nearly the whole of the coast, without a single rival, after some hordes of Moors or Arabs had been either subdued, or quietly quitted the field to their opponents. Several tribes, it is also said, were massacred in cold blood by way of rendering security doubly secure.

The power of the Moors, immediately previous to this period, extended from beyond Sofala to the confines of the Red Sea, scattered in many populous towns and settlements now no longer in existence, and the remains of which cannot even be traced. This singular depopulation is surprising, and by no means well explained. It may have been owing either to the violence, or monopolization of commerce by their new masters; but these, however, never profited materially by it; and it is certain, that the country which they found rich and populous, was, except in a few places, in little more than a century left barren and deserted. The ascendancy of the Portuguese, which extended to receiving tribute from several adjoining powerful native states, seems to have declined about the time the Dutch began successfully to dispute their power in India; and by whom an attack was made upon this settlement, which however failed. At present it is the only place of importance remaining to its discoverers on this side of Africa, its dependencies, already partially noticed, being of comparatively trifling value; and the dominion of the islands is gone altogether. Zanzibar, Monfia, Membas, Pemba, and even the Comoro group, which were all formerly dependant on, or paid tribute to, Mosambique, are at present indepen-

dent or under the Arab government of Muscat. The precise extent of the Portuguese authority is not very well known in Europe; we have, however, ascertained this point, it being confined between 23° 50′ and 10° 18′ south lat., commencing at the village of Inhambana, or Yambana, and terminating at Cape Delgado, neither fact nor courtesy, notwithstanding any assertions to the contrary, giving them claim to a league farther; for the authority of the Arabs begins at the last-mentioned point.

The town, situated on a small island of the same name, is between two and three miles long and one broad, though in many places not so much; near the fort, indeed, the breadth does not exceed 300 yards. It lies across the mouth of a bay indenting the main land of Africa, the distance to the latter being about three miles. On the inner, or N. W. side of the island, is the harbour, protected by it in front from the sea, and at the entrance by shoals and the islets of St. George and St. Jago. The island lies nearly east and west; at the latter extremity is an entrance for boats, and by the former, the main channel, for vessels of the largest size, guarded by banks and the principal fort, past which vessels must proceed within half-pistol shot. The harbour is therefore secure and of considerable extent; two small rivers, navigable only for market-boats, empty themselves into it at the bottom of the bay, about eight or nine miles from the town. Mosambique, as well as the other islets, are little better than coral-banks covered by a portion of sand, and elevated only a few feet above the level of the sea, from which they seem not long to have emerged. They possess scarcely any vegetation, except a few cocoa-nut trees, the hardy roots of which lie under few obligations to any species of soil.

On the left of the landing-place appeared the guard-house, occupied by a body of tall, well-dressed African soldiers, who in figure bore a strong resemblance to the finest of the Bengal sepoys, though in general stronger men. The uniform was white; some pains seemed to have been bestowed upon it, which, as this is not commonly the case with the Portuguese, we found, on inquiry, was owing to being turned out occasionally to the governor, who passing, indeed, soon afterwards, received the usual honours stretched at full length in his palanquin.

An open space from the pier leads into the principal street, characterised by the national taste of narrow streets and high houses, the former not remarkable for cleanliness, and the latter partly of a dirty yellow colour, impaired by neglect and decay. The windows seemed barricadoed with lattices, as if

the town abounded in thieves. This, though formerly intended as a jealous precaution, is retained to obviate the heat by the free admission of air; but, as few are light and neat in appearance, the eye is continually reminded of the bars of a prison.

The governor has two residences, one facing the open space already mentioned, and the other to the right, distinguished by superior neatness, but, probably, merely a temporary abode. The former is his proper habitation; it would be difficult, however, to conjecture its existence without previous information, part of the exterior appearing more like an old storehouse than the mansion of the first personage in the settlement. We were first led to it by the clashing of billiard-balls, and the confused clamour of contending voices, so that we at first took it to be a tavern, or gambling-house.

The entrance is by a small arch-way, leading into a flagged quadrangular court, which was occupied by several palanquins. A flight of large steps led to the apartments, which are lofty and extensive, tolerably well decorated, and open, by their construction, for the free admission of air; for as heat is the great enemy to be guarded against in these climates, the plan of the house, its divisions, conveniences, and furniture, are all calculated for this primary object. In one of the rooms we found the billiard-table a favourite amusement of the governor, in which he is said to be expert. It was now occupied by some young officers and Frenchmen, from Mauritius and Bourbon, who were chattering, betting, playing, and swearing with constitutional vivacity; the latter are understood to be in high favour here at present, owing to speculations in slaves, a trade which still flourishes in these islands, notwithstanding all our vigilance.

Adjoining this is a new church, besides which there are two or three others, though of inferior consideration. Mosambique is the see of a bishop, who is dependant on a higher ecclesiastical power at Goa. We have not yet had the pleasure of seeing this prelate, who, like some of his reverend brethren in Europe, is said to be more often employed in sporting, than in religious occupations; but what is most remarkable in a Portuguese town, we have not met with a single clerical character of any description in the streets.

The town is of considerable length, containing many houses and warehouses confusedly crowded together in one principal street, and two or three smaller ones. Their narrowness shades them from the sun; but it is a serious inconvenience to strangers, to run the risk of losing an eye by the bamboo poles on which the slaves carry their burthens, an evil which

the natives, lolling in pelanquins, do not feel. These are the only vehicles in use here for pleasure, and there are none at all devoted to business. For a commercial place it seems dull and insipid; there is neither the noise nor bustle of busy life; no waggons, bales, hogsheads, or cranes in motion, to give the spectator an idea of the usual indefatigable activity of trade.

At the western extremity is a capacious hospital for the sick, which, at certain seasons, are sometimes numerous. The climate, however, is not remarkable for mortality, except, perhaps, among soldiers, who, being either detached to other more unhealthy parts on duty, or tired of the sedentary and listless mode of life in this confined spot, are induced to commit excesses that bring on illness. There is, however, no specific disease, as far as I can learn, peculiar to the settlement; I might, perhaps, except *ennui*. Were I to remain here, I should die of it in three months. The hospital is gratuitously superintended by some charitable females, alive to the better feelings of humanity. At some distance beyond this are the ruins of a religious establishment, a small battery in decay, with the carriages broken, and guns honey-combed, and near a burying-ground.

Black Town lies in the rear of the former, facing the sea, to the southward. It consists of lines of huts, formed of hurdles, or bamboos, fixed in the ground, and connected by wicker-work, with sod or dry grass for the roofs. The greater number could only be entered in a stooping posture; some even required prostration, and did not admit of the owners remaining upright when within. Yet they were filled by strong, healthy, active inhabitants, whose numerous children, gambolling to and fro, naked as they were born, displayed ample proofs of health and vivacity; and in some spots their numbers, added to the structure of the huts, suggested the idea of so many breeding-cages. Both men and women, except the domestic slaves, have rarely any other cloathing than a mere rag to cover their nakedness. The breasts of the women are quite exposed. Sometimes they appear of an unusual form, and, from neglect, or the relaxation of the climate, become so much elongated, that a mother would find little difficulty in suckling one child at her knee, and another over her shoulder. They are fed with as little difficulty as they are cloathed or housed. Cocoa-nuts, plaintains, cassava, rice, and other vegetable productions, constitute the principal articles.

About five hundred yards from the side of the island is a rock in the sea, on which is erected a small fort, intended to guard the approach from the southward. It is, however, so

much in decay, that a frigate's guns would silence it in twenty minutes. Some shoals form a much better protection, and, indeed, the principal danger to be apprehended from an enemy on this side, is from boats effecting a debarkation.

At the eastern extremity of the town is a rope-walk, for the manufacture of the cordage and cables called *Kayar*. This substance appears like hair, but really is the fibrous covering of the recent cocoa-nut, previously prepared, and then formed into the useful articles just mentioned. It is in general use throughout India, by the country traders, instead of hemp. Some believe it equally strong, and more durable than that article, when confined to salt-water, but liable to be soon destroyed in fresh: it is also procured at a comparatively trifling expence. It is manufactured wherever the material abounds, and a large quantity is said to come from the Maldive islands to the Malabar and Coromandel coasts.

Our next visit was to the grand fort, situated in the very extremity of the eastern end of the island. We had previously attempted to gain admission in the earlier part of the day, but, having omitted to procure the approbation of the governor, were politely referred to him. This ceremony, we were told, is scrupulously exacted, even from the inhabitants. The entrance is by a single gate, the approach to which is a pleasant walk along the foot of part of the western curtain and bastion, well commanded by guns and every species of missiles. The interior exceeded our expectations in its extent; but there were marks of neglect and decay in almost every part. The centre is a vacant space overgrown with long grass. The quarters of the soldiers being ample, though in a bad state of repair: those of the commandant, and other officers, seem neat and commodious, but are not at all improved by their antiquity, which seems coeval with the walls.

The form of this work is somewhat irregular, but approaching to square, and strengthened by four bastions. The walls are thick and faced with stone, connected together by cement, which must be of some tenacity to have resisted neglect for three entire centuries. On the land side, the height of the curtain probably exceeds fifty feet: toward the sea, the foundation gradually descending to the water, renders it considerably higher, but every approach, whether by land or water, is perfectly commanded. It is destitute of a ditch, being situated, however, on a low, narrow point of land, washed by the sea; the labour of 300 men might insulate it in a month.

A young officer accompanied us, by desire of the commandant: he was very attentive, and, for our information,

essayed, with great good-nature, to give explanations on military points which we could readily perceive he himself did not well understand. We counted about sixty guns mounted, and nearly twenty vacant embrasures. The guns are of all calibres, and not very well arranged; at least, I believe, it is not usual among skilful engineers to place a *four* next neighbour to a forty-two pounder. The greater number are of brass, or, on the western side, of iron painted to resemble the former, and if not eminent for service, are, at least, reverend from age. One of our party distinguished a piece, bearing date ann. 1520. There are no mortars. The guns on the sea face are principally mounted *en barbet*, an unfortunate arrangement where strength, and not show, is the object.

In 1810, two French frigates approached the fort, pretty closely, under English colours, and fired two or three shots, one of which injured the muzzle, and took off a trunnion of one of the guns on this battery, and which, though perfectly useless, still retains its place, as a memento of having once seen the face of an enemy. Our companion actually pointed it out as a species of trophy.

Toward the land and harbour there are embrasures, with a high parapet; but in the present state of matters, perhaps a vigorous enemy would not experience much resistance. Several of the gun-carriages are rotten and unserviceable, others would tumble to pieces in a few discharges: the guns are principally supplied with stone-shot, and there are no bomb-proofs. At the foot of the north-east curtain, on projecting points of rock, a little above high-water, are three advanced works, slight and scarcely defensible, but which might be rendered of powerful effect on hostile shipping. They mount twenty-four guns; so that altogether this fort can mount above one hundred pieces of ordnance.

The soldiers are natives of the adjoining territories, and having become slaves by war or purchase, are retained in this capacity. The commissioned and non-commissioned officers are Europeans. The commandant, who is a Frenchman, came here a private, twenty-three years ago, and, (heaven knows!) amply deserves his present elevation for such a servitude, in such a place. Discipline did not seem very strictly enforced, for the sentinels were either sitting, leaning against the walls, amusing themselves with casual visitors at the gate, or sometimes quitting their muskets altogether, to play at pitch and toss. As we passed, they resumed them, and paid the usual salute, and as quickly recommenced their play. When off duty, they disrobe altogether, like the English sepoys,

clothes being an incumbrance with which they are glad to dispence on every convenient opportunity, as the duty is neither very constant nor laborious. When well-officered, however, these men make good soldiers. We saw few Europeans.

On the whole, however, the fort, neglected as it is, is respectable, and might be made very formidable. But when we consider that it was erected in the infancy of fortification, and with resources that could not be of the most extended description, it will be admitted to constitute a splendid and honourable monument of the enterprize of the first adventurers. Even in the present day, neither the colonies of the French nor Dutch, in the East, have a fortification equally good, and, except the three presidencies, perhaps few of our own. It is, therefore, perfectly safe against any attempts of the Madegasses. But as, in case of attack, the timidity of the inhabitants might induce them to leave the town to be plundered, and to retire here for protection, such an event is not probable, while the fort retains its present imposing aspect. Yet the settlement has been threatened by messages to that effect, more than once; and some dependencies to the northward have been already ravaged, and the people carried into slavery.

The south-east side of the harbour is formed by a peninsula, called *Cabasero*, about twelve miles long and three broad. This district supplies the principal wants of the colony, for the island produces nothing, yet it is not very generally cultivated. Considerable numbers of bullocks, goats, swine, and poultry, are reared annually, as well as rice, yams, cassava, plaintains, palm-cabbage, and a variety of other vegetable productions. Rice and cattle, however, are also frequently imported from other places. The number of plantations is considerable, the slaves numerous, the villages, about five or six in number, besides several good houses belonging to the white settlers; the great defect of the peninsula is said to be want of irrigation. The majority of tropical fruits are produced in abundance, and also some of the European, particularly oranges, which are reputed very fine.

Mosambique, August 22.

While occupied in examining every thing worthy of notice, Captain Beaver, who had official communications to make, attended by some of the officers, waited upon the governor. The name of his Excellency is Don Antonio Manuel de Mello Castro e Mendoza, and, according to report, is a personage of no less consequence than the length of his name would seem to imply. He arrived here in July 1809. The

three years allowed to governors having now expired, he is in daily expectation of being superseded, in order to proceed to the government of Madeira, to which he is appointed.

We have heard, but know not with what truth, that his excellency, during the whole of the time, has scarcely visited any part of his government; that he has introduced no improvements in either agriculture or trade; that he has rarely quitted his house, or been exposed to the sun, lest he should endanger his invaluable health. With a very small official salary, it is said he has realized a fortune of £80,000; and his prince, as a further mark of royal approbation, has conferred on him the distinguished honour just mentioned. These are very pretty things. I should much like to be a governor on such conditions; for who would sacrifice his own ease to mistaken ideas of duty, when there were such substantial rewards for indolence?

Don Antonio affects considerable state, and does not seem to be very communicative or inquisitive upon points that might be considered interesting. He has not once inquired, during the interviews with Captain Beaver, respecting the fate of his country, the general state of Europe, or whether such places as Portugal and Spain yet existed, or were blotted out of the list of independent nations. To the offers of Captain B——, who had orders to render every assistance, either by negociation or force, in putting a stop to the depredations of the Madegasses, he did not seem to pay much attention. Mosambique, he observed, was secure from their attacks, but its dependencies were sometimes ravaged. The numbers of the savages were generally very considerable. Their ferocity unbounded. He had asked for two or three small vessels of war to protect the coast, but they had not arrived. It would be useless also, he said, for the Nisus to go to any one part of Madagascar, without proceeding round the coast, and communicating with each of the different chiefs individually; the winds, also, at this season of the year, were bad. The difficulties to be encountered on the coast, by a large ship. considerable.

This information was extracted from his excellency, only by a species of cross-examination. He seemed reserved to Captain B—, on many points; but, by no means, it is said, from want of information, or natural talent, but rather indolence, or what is more probable, jealousy of English interference. To say the truth, I am afraid we are not in great favour here; a British man-of-war seldom is, under certain circumstances; foreigners, whether allies or enemies, have an instinctive aversion to her when their local traffic, views, or

policy, are at variance with the spirit of the laws, or the general good. We have been illiberal enough to conclude, that some slave-speculations are going on, which would be embarrassed by our presence. This was partly confirmed by the expression of indignation from some of the merchants, at the detention of certain Portuguese vessels at the Cape of Good Hope, under suspicion of illicit slave-trading. These circumstances, probably, his excellency cannot controul; he was not always, however, so reserved; for when Captain Fisher called here, in the Racehorse brig-of-war, immediately after Don Antonio had commenced his government, he was very politely received.

It was with the utmost regret we heard the report of the untimely deaths of Messrs. Cowan and Donavan confirmed beyond the possibility of doubt. In a former letter I mentioned the design of these gentlemen, to penetrate from the Cape to this settlement, and the general opinion entertained of their fate, which appears to be too true. In 1809, Captain Fisher was directed to call here, and ascertain whether any authentic accounts had been received of the travellers, and to request the governor to dispatch persons acquainted with the country, to conduct them hither in safety, or in case of any fatal accidents, to procure such information, papers, or other memorials, as circumstances would permit. This accordingly had been done, in the persons of confidential black traders, from whom, according to the governor's account, the following report was received.

The unfortunate gentlemen had nearly reached the confines of Inhambana, between the latter and Sofala, and about forty leagues from the sea; towards evening they entered a native village in their waggon, and in the course of the night, without any assigned cause, except the love of plunder, were all massacred, except two, who escaped to the woods, and have not been since heard of. No literary fragment of the expedition, either in journal, drawing, or letter, could be found; a few pieces of linen, stained with blood, were the only memorials. Don Antonio added, that had they succeeded in getting near to Sofala, or to any part of the coast between Inhambana and Mosambique, they would have been safe. To the southward of the former place, the natives, not only of the coast, but in almost every part of the interior, are extremely cruel and treacherous. No probability exists, he observed, of receiving any further details of the transaction; few of the tribes are at any time stationary; and particularly, after such a crime, they would certainly remove, to avoid the probability of punishment.

So far the governor. There is, however, a report in the town, that the unfortunate travellers had been invited to partake of a feast by the chiefs of the village, and having given some offence, met their fate while being the guests of these barbarians. This story seems to have no good foundation, nor is it generally believed; besides, it is contrary to the usual maxims of savages, who protect, rather than injure, those who put themselves under their protection; they must be ruthless wretches indeed, who invite only to destroy.

The obscurity in which this shocking transaction is involved, has induced some to attribute it to the direct instigation of the Portuguese, influenced by the idea, that by knowing more of the manners and people of the interior, we should interfere with their trade. This I cannot for a moment believe; however jealous of the nation, they would not descend to the deliberate murder of individuals; and, at all events, if even an ignorant and suspicious mulatto resident should commit such an atrocity, we must amply acquit the government. The circumstance of there being no papers recovered, ought not to be deemed suspicious; they were of no utility to savages, and, from their texture, easily destroyed, which, in all probability, took place immediately; whereas the linen, being more durable, explains why it was partly recovered. Metallic articles, such as arms and utensils, were of course too valuable to be destroyed or given up.

As we may be permitted to derive wisdom from experience, it will be a material addition to any future expedition from the Cape, to attach to it some of the natives of the countries through which it may pass; and this sometimes may be no difficult matter in that colony. For slave-vessels condemned there, turn over their unfortunate people to the care of government, which again distributes them to the navy, army, inhabitants, and public institutions, for a certain number of years, at the conclusion of which they are to be emancipated. Many of these men are natives of the eastern shore, or of the interior, and might prove good guides, if not protectors, in situations of danger, taking care that they should be liberated on arriving at their native place; so that gratitude, or the hope of reward, might attach them to the final fortunes of the expedition.

Among others of this class, now doing duty in this ship, that is, as seamen, is a native of the place where the travellers were killed, Inhambana or as he himself calls it, "Yambana." *Moses*, for such is his present name, understands little more than the monosyllables of English; he first fell into the hands of the French, whence he came to the Nisus; and what seems rather singular, not one of his companions, amounting to thirty in

number, natives of the continent, and of Madagascar, can converse with him. The only one who understands something of his language, is a Portuguese black, a native of Goa, an interpreter also for some of the others who do not speak English; and as this man seems a strong, trusty, spirited fellow, might himself be of use to any adventurer on the coast. "Moses," at present, can tell little more about his country than the name; at least, so far as we have found, but hereafter he may possibly furnish some useful information. He seems, however, naturally dull and timid, perhaps the effect of being among strangers; the reason of his being first particularly noticed, arose from concealing himself in the hold of the ship, on account of one of the seamen jestingly telling him he was to be eaten next day.

I have little doubt, however, that many of these men now at the Cape, who understand a little English or Dutch, might furnish some tolerable idea of the nations to the eastward, if attentively examined; or they may at least accompany future travellers. Had even poor Moses attended Messrs. Cowan and Donavan, their lives might have been preserved, as it seems the fatal catastrophe took place in the immediate vicinity of his country. Should any future adventurer attempt to explore the untrodden ground of Madagascar, there is a native now onboard this ship, who would probably prove very useful; his name is James Baker; he speaks English very well, and seems not deficient in intelligence. An idea prevails among his companions, that he was minister to one of the chiefs; but, though we know not his political talents, he, at least, makes a very smart sailor.

An interesting fact was related to Captain Beaver, by Don Antonio, which adds another item to the scanty list of those already known respecting the interior of this great continent. Hitherto it has been supposed that no overland communication existed between the eastern and western shores. The occurrence, though certainly rare, has, however, actually taken place, for two Portuguese mulattoes, natives of Angola, set off from that place on a mercantile excursion to the interior; and being led further than they originally intended, determined at once to penetrate to Sena on the Zambezi, where they actually arrived, after an interval of five years. This long detention arose from the curiosity and caprice of the intervening tribes. They are represented, however, as not unfriendly in general to travellers, the route not peculiarly difficult, and the probable length of time necessary for the journey, if not detained, about two hundred days. The latter statement is, perhaps, incorrect; for, as the distance is about 1500 miles in a direct line, and most likely many hundreds

more by the common track, travellers must proceed, without halting, at a considerable rate daily during the whole period, which is an improbable circumstance in any part of Africa. These men set out soon afterwards on their return, by the same route, without coming to Mosambique; and, by subsequent accounts from the western coast, it appears, arrived in safety.

A circumstance of this kind admits the possibility of Horneman, the traveller, being still in existence, though, perhaps in slavery, or detained in some more honourable thraldom. Some vague reports of natives once stated him to be at Tombuctoo, reverenced for piety.* Disguised, as he seems to have been, by the published report of his travels, this scheme might have been possible, the assumption of a religious character affording many facilities to his enterprize, though highly dangerous in case of detection. He may, perhaps, have formed the design also of returning either by the eastern or southern routes, instead of the western, by which he proceeded; and as his assumed character, after emerging from among the Moors, would be, perhaps, of little advantage in the negro states, it is just possible he may be detained in the latter, as in the instance of these mulattoes. The narrative of these men would be highly interesting in many points, tending, as it would, to elucidate various facts relating to a vast tract of country, in fact, an unknown world, which is now nearly a blank in our maps. But this must not be expected, without chance throws them in the way of some intelligent European. The men themselves, probably poor and ignorant, know not the value of the communication; and, we may rest assured, the Portuguese government will take no trouble on the subject.†

It is generally believed here, that attempts made to penetrate to the interior from this coast, will not be successful. This, however, is a merely gratuitous supposition. The experiment has not been made, nor perhaps will be; for there is an evident disposition to exaggerate the difficulties, to depict the people as monsters rather than men, and to find impassable mountains, rivers, and deserts, which probably have

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* The recent publication of Adams, the American seaman, as well as a communication from the Bey of Tripoli, seem to render it certain that Horneman died from disease; and that, therefore, the story of his religious character in Tombuctoo is untrue.

† The preceding fact was communicated to my friend, Lieutenant Hawkey, second in command in the late expedition to the river Congo, in order to make enquiries on the subject, should any opportunity offer; but his premature death prevented any thing of this kind.

no existence. By Sena, and the other settlements on the Zambezi, the scheme is considered equally hopeless, as the efforts of several of the governors to penetrate some distance in person, have failed: but, perhaps, this is no just criterion of the impossibility of the measure. Travelling with a retinue is difficult in any country, and among savages particularly suspicious: they very naturally think of conquest more than curiosity, and had they submitted to the latter, it is more than probable they would have been subjected to the former. The safety of the adventurers from Angola, proves that individuals are not always hostilely received. Natives of very distant parts frequently arrive at Mosambique, from the interior, on commercial pursuits, their language and appearance frequently differing from those near the coasts. Their journies occupy three, four, and six months; but in this are included frequent delays. They are likewise so little acquainted with the value of their merchandize here, that it is commonly disposed of for beads and other trifles, so that the merchants profit very considerably. Some information might be supposed to be obtained from these adventurers; but this does not seem to be the case. Vague reports, indeed, from some, state they have seen extensive waters, ships, and white men, or that others, with whom they traffic, have seen them. These assertions are too loose to deserve much credit, though the fact is not improbable.

Much of the apprehension of the Portuguese arises from the determined hostility of a nation extending in links, immediately in the rear of part of their settlements. Mosambique seems particularly the object of hatred; the continental part, particularly the peninsula of Cabasero, has been subject to frequent incursions and ravages of the most cruel description; and even the town is indebted to its insular situation alone for security. It is not, indeed, very long since the peninsula was invaded by a large force, armed with spears, bows and arrows, and muskets, when every thing within their reach was carried off or destroyed. Upon another occasion, many years ago, the governor was killed in a rencontre with the same people: they are stated to be bold and ferocious, murdering the whites who occasionally fall into their power, and making slaves of others; for such unfortunately are the usual customs of war in this part of Africa. This strong dislike, however, may be partly owing to unfair dealings in trade, or the conviction that they themselves are the rightful owners of the soil from which they have been unjustly ejected. This tribe does not seem stationary: sometimes it is found near the Zambezi, at other periods beyond Cape Delgado, but generally at some distance from the sea. It seems a scion from the Madagascar stock,

The habits, predatory spirit, and warlike disposition of the people, are similar, with this single exception, that the latter, like the majority of islanders, are equally bold upon the water as upon the land.

I have already mentioned, that the dominion of the Portuguese extends no farther northward than Cape Delgado. Near this point are situated the Querimbo islands, also subject to their authority; they lie not far from the main, and are numerous, though of inconsiderable extent or value. *Oibo* is the principal, and had several considerable plantations and villages four years ago, when it was invaded by the Madegasses, who destroyed or carried off not only the produce but the people, who had not time to escape. No stronger proof is wanting of the weakness of Mosambique, when it cannot command respect even from savages, or protect its settlements from their attacks. Bombay Jack justly remarked, that it did not possess either the courage, power, or enterprize of a single Madagascar tribe. This is not so much the fault of the governors as of the government at home. The residents also, in the smaller dependencies, become either too indolent, or so much occupied with their emoluments, as to neglect their security. These situations are commonly purchased. The establishments are usually on the most despicable scale. A mud fort, without guns or other defences, a few huts forming a town, some native traders termed merchants, and a dozen black soldiers, without discipline, constitute the elements of these settlements. The residents collect the revenues, and are ordered to prevent contraband or foreign trade. But they are seldom proof against bribery. Their situation is certainly miserable enough. They are shut out from the world and from society, with scarcely a companion but the natives, whose habits they adopt, and, smitten with the charms of native beauty, keep seraglios.

The population of Mosambique, that is, Europeans and their descendants, may be about six hundred; free people of colour nearly as many; slaves between four and five thousand, beside those kept for sale. The military are so scattered, that it is difficult to tell their real numbers. But I do not think more than seven hundred, at the utmost, could be mustered. Only a few adventurers of any description come hither from Europe. It bears the character of being unhealthy, though this, perhaps, is exaggerated, but it is otherwise low in reputation. Young men of the mother-country, not unjustly, we are told, consider it a species of forlorn-hope in the campaign of life.

Commerce is confined principally to slaves, elephants' teeth,

gold-dust, columbo-root, medicinal gums, some amber, cowries, and rayar. The ivory is often procured in considerable quantities. The value of gold-dust annually exported, may amount to about £16,000; but, at present, I understand the price is higher than it has been. In return for the above articles, would be received flour, butter, cheese, wine, brandy, and dried fruit from the Cape; beside hardware, clothing, and trinkets of various descriptions from England. I doubt whether the charter of the India company would allow such an intercourse at present.* The proposal, however, was well received by the governor, who expressed a wish for its execution.

But the most valuable branch of trade has been in slaves. Formerly Mosambique exported above ten thousand annually, supplying several parts of South America, and almost all the islands in the Indian ocean: indeed, throughout the East, the common term for an African is Mosambiquer. At present, by the exertions of England, and the conquest of the islands, the demand is diminished to about three thousand, quite enough to shock any mind but that of a slave-trader.

Yesterday Captain Beaver, accompanied by some of the officers, visited the *Musrel* river, near the bottom of the bay, and also the governor's country-house, which is in the vicinity. The latter is neat, though not very extensive; the situation charming, and the gardens fine, though at present not in the best order. It is, however, a pleasant retreat from the scorching and barren sand of the island, as well as the confinement of the town. Don Antonio visits it, occasionally, in a state-barge kept for that purpose, and also his friends, when inclined to enjoy the amusement of sporting. In the mean time, having a fine breeze, we sailed to the western shore of the bay, but did not land on account of the surf. We saw a variety of negro-huts, though no plantation of consequence, these being principally confined to the peninsula. The land was not woody, neither had it any appearance of cultivation.

We have been now some hours at sea, whisking rapidly along on our way to Johanna. Bombay Jack is delighted at the idea of being so near to his home, and I long to be acquainted with the people if they at all resemble him. I understand Sir William Jones once visited the island, and sketched the place and people with his usual elegance. I regret much not having met with his description; but it is ever thus with us at sea. Often have we to lament the destiny that makes us strangers to general literature; for alas! a ship library, like a sea education, is too strongly affected by imperious circum-

* Since this was written, the restrictions imposed by this charter have been withdrawn.

stances, to embrace the admixture of a great variety of subjects.

A thick fog obscured the horizon shortly after we had quitted the harbour, and a large Portuguese ship suddenly appeared at hand. We conjectured she carried the new governor. Our Johannese friend examined her attentively with a glass. "Well, Jack," said I, "I hope he will be more generous than the former, for your attention to his vessels."—"No, no," replied he. "Portuguese do no good—no work—no fight—no do any thing." Our protection had given him a greater degree of consequence at Mosambique than formerly, on setting out for the Cape in the Eclipse. He could not then gain much attention; but the governor now presented him with a walking-cane, formed of ivory, and headed with silver, on which our guest did not seem to place much value. A much higher satisfaction was the improving state of one of his men, who suffered from an attack of melancholy, believing, as he daily expressed to his master, that the crew intended to eat him. His attention to this poor creature was incessant; his confidence in the divine goodness no less marked by frequent effusions of piety. "It is a fine wind, Jack," said one of the officers to whom he was speaking. "You will see your wife, family, and friends, to-morrow." "You should say," replied the old man, emphatically, "*if God pleases.*"—There could not be a finer rebuke, and I hope we shall all feel the better for it. We calculate on seeing Johanna to-morrow evening. In the mean time I shall conclude, till I am enabled to cater some further food for curiosity.

Johanna, August 25.

Yesterday morning, shortly after day-break, we descried this interesting island, rising into gentle hills covered with the most vivid green turf, surmounted here and there with topes of palm-trees. We coasted for some time along a bold shore, defined by an even line, like a wall, and in many places appearing inaccessible. As we rounded *Saddle Island*, so called from some fancied resemblance, the shore became less abrupt and the prospect more varied. Before us was an extensive bay, scarcely ruffled by the breeze. On the beach appeared the town, distinguished by the turret of a mosque, and not far from it a conspicuous white building; further on some ruins, and near the shore a variety of boats in motion, as if preparing to meet us. The land rose gently, terminating in small hillocks, with alternate cavities, something like the surface of a vast strawberry, both hill and dale being clothed with trees and verdure. The time was towards evening, when the sun, still retaining its warmth, had lost its tropical fierceness, so that

the mellow beams made the landscape inimitable; for nature, variously tinted with green and yellow, seemed in her gayest apparel.

The decks soon became thronged with a most motley group. The turbans, shawls, white robes, features, bare feet, and manners altogether, forcibly reminded us of the Dubashes at Madras. The first personage of any importance introduced himself, with a low bow, as *Bakamadi*, a grandee, and his majesty of Johanna's pilot, deputed to insure the safety of his majesty King George's ship. His lordship was followed by the Duke of Hamilton, Lord Rodney, Lord Howe, Admiral Blankett, and many other illustrious noblemen and warriors. We were not a little surprised to be so unexpectedly introduced to so much good company. Some, that their exalted rank might not be mistaken, had it engraved on copper and hung on their breasts—a burlesque on badges of a higher order; for a man might receive an instructive lesson on the follies of vanity, baubles being still the same, whether on brass or on enamel. We found their lordships, however, like some of their noble brethren in Europe, have a most attentive regard to character; for the whole being provided with certificates of honesty and good conduct from former visitors, were duly submitted to our inspection, in order to gain employment, as their lordships are not above work; and I assure you there were many warm arguments before it was settled who should have the honour of becoming our envoy to the town for vegetables and clean linen. I should have mentioned that Mr. Pitt and the Duke of Portland accompanied others of the nobility. These illustrious characters were in a state of nudity in the lower extremities; but, like their English name-sakes, having a kind of prescriptive right to make demands on public generosity, they did not hesitate in asking for our cast-off shoes and stockings. An unserviceable hat, a sword, or a uniform coat, were invaluable gifts, and productive of no slight degree of envy to the possessors.

This scene amused us for several hours. Some of the peers inquired affectionately after their name-sakes in England, begged their compliments on our return, and promised the best reception should they at any time visit Johanna. Others solicitously asked after the health of their good friend King George, and a few even hoped for peace, abusing Bonaparte with as much cordiality as if they had been tutored by some of the London editors. One of the most inquisitive expressed his joy, that his Royal Highness the Prince Regent made so good a governor, as he termed it; and, to our utter astonish-

ment, asked whether an *illustrious reconciliation* had yet taken place? This talkative personage (Bakamadi) we found had been at the Cape of Good Hope; he paid a vast number of compliments to our country, and seemed studiously attentive. Before he took leave for the evening he begged to be retained as merchant in preference to others, and hoped for the honour of the officers' company to dinner next day, when they should be introduced to his wife, and have as good roast-beef as any in England.

Early this morning I received a polite message from his majesty, requesting my attendance at the palace, in consequence of the illness of a favourite nephew. Several of the officers accompanied me; on the beach we found a special messenger in waiting, who conducted us to the house of our friend Bombay Jack. Numbers of the people eagerly followed, asking innumerable questions respecting our health, welfare, appetite, slumbers, and a variety of others, equally friendly and unmeaning. Notwithstanding the general eagerness of curiosity, we were not at all incommoded; they paid the most unremitting attention in mere trifles, and displayed all the respect and submission with the softness of Asiatics. The lady of our late guest, accompanied by her husband and children, received us with great courtesy; this is not a general thing; female charms are here rated too highly to be exposed to profane eyes; but our friend, as well as Bakamadi, seems to have conquered this prejudice. She was now old, and did not appear to have been handsome; but seemed chosen, like the Vicar of Wakefield's wife, for qualities that would wear better than beauty, which, from her domestic exertions, indeed, appeared to be the case. Our host undertook to announce our readiness to wait upon his majesty; the palace was close at hand; but, with a due regard to the ceremonious forms of royalty, even in Johanna, it was more than an hour before the expected summons arrived.

The residence of the king is situated near the centre of the town, in one of the principal streets, or rather alleys, for they are so narrow that two persons can scarcely walk abreast. It is an irregular stone-building of some extent, partly inclosed by dead walls, and not remarkable for shew or neatness. Part projects over the street, forming an arch, one front of which represents the head of a ship, the other the stern. We were received, and passed up a flight of stone-steps by some guards armed with spears. Bombay Jack led the way through some anti-rooms, open, airy, and furnished with cane sofas, till we reached the audience-chamber. This apartment is not larger than a closet, and is situated immediately over the arch; the

walls appeared to have been once white-washed; the door barely admits one person at a time, and a single window, overlooking the street, affords a view of approaching visitors, for which reason, perhaps, this small place is chosen in preference to others. His majesty was seated at the further end, in an arm-chair, with his back to the window. On either side were placed cushions for visitors; and over the royal head was suspended, slung by packthread, a common glass-tumbler, in lieu of a lamp, filled with cocoa-nut oil, the droppings of which threatened a momentary descent upon the crown.

To do all honour to the occasion, I advanced with my best bow, which his majesty, rising politely, returned, smiling most graciously, and expressing his pleasure at the interview. What an imposing name is that of king! Even this humble mimickry of royalty produced a respect from our party, that repressed the smile ready to kindle at the surrounding objects of burlesque grandeur. Our conductor acted as master of the ceremonies so well, that he might be supposed to have wielded the gold stick for years; nor was the king at all behind in the duties of his station. He excelled us so much in bowing, not only in agility but frequency, that we began to suspect he had lately secured a master from the Isle of France for the occasion; being, indeed, almost too well-bred for a king, for he would not, on any account, resume his chair till we were all seated.

Sultan Allahwah, or Allahwy, is a robust man, something below the middle stature, about forty-two years of age, with a full face, not destitute of intelligence, and of a deep brown colour. His dress consisted of red plush small-clothes, and a close vest trimmed with silver-lace and buttons of the same metal. Over this was another garment of black velvet, something between a cloak and a coat, reaching to the calf of the leg, richly covered and partly embroidered with silver-lace. The diadem graced his brow. This was principally formed of silver, also having ornaments of the same, and of gold pending from it on either side, besides several pearls, some topazes and other stones in front, which had a good effect. Instead of a sceptre he held in his hand a sabre handsomely mounted, and two Cashmere shawls hung carelessly over his shoulders; his legs were naked, but his feet enveloped by clumsy shoes, such as are worn by labourers in England. The sultan has reigned ten years. He has three wives and ten children, but no concubines, a wonderful piece of self-denial in an eastern prince. His eldest son, a very fine young man, possessed of mild, engaging, and expressive features, and about eighteen years of age, sat on his right hand, and interested us in his

favour from the first moment we saw him; he wore on his head a species of coronet, formed, like most other of the royal ornaments, of silver.

Both parties were so well pleased at meeting, that we soon lost sight of forms, and entered into familiar conversation. The compliments and congratulations of his majesty were numerous; he understood a little English, and what he could not comprehend was interpreted by his son and Bombay Jack. He praised his friend, good King George, Sir John Cradock, Captain Beaver, and the whole English nation abundantly; in fact, every thing English was admirable.—"English understand well here," said the king, pointing to his head. We were all expected, in our various capacities, to perform wonders; and, first, to try the skill of our mechanics, a piece of board was produced, which he requested might be made to tell the seasons, day of the month, hour of the day, full and change of the moon, position and names of the principal stars, and other things equally impossible. This, however, was evaded without any loss of credit on our part, on the plea of want of time. His nephew was so ill, with a severe wound in the head, that I found it necessary to open a vein. The old women in attendance, quite dismayed at this operation, fled the room in terror; the patient, however, a fine lad about sixteen, submitted without any hesitation; he soon felt relieved, and I had the pleasure of pronouncing him out of danger, to the great satisfaction of the king. After this we were presented with oranges and cocoa-nut milk, the latter of which his majesty jocularly termed Johanna wine, adding, with a smile, that it was not very good for Englishmen;—a hint probably that he is aware of our reputed partiality for stronger waters. A bow and a few arrows were afterwards presented to each of our party; a similar present had been already given me by my patient; and when we retired, his majesty bowed us out with the characteristic expertness of a European minister of state.

The moment I quitted the palace, I became surrounded by a host of applicants for medical aid. It was impossible to evade their importunity; my reputation had gone forth, and at first the place seemed so prolific in patients, that the time I had set apart for other pursuits threatened to be occupied in prescribing. Some of these were incurable, others afflicted simply with old age, and several with complaints altogether imaginary; the great majority, in fact, desired the assistance of medicine more to prevent than to cure diseases—a very sensible plan, no doubt, had my art extended so far. Several messages in the mean time arrived from the fair sex, requesting my attendance at their houses; and these calls being of course irresis-

tible, I complied with the greater pleasure, as they promised to make me acquainted not only with their domestic arrangements, but with themselves. This was an honour, however, purely professional, which none of my companions were permitted to enjoy; for, according to the selfish tenets of Mahometism, the women, as I have already hinted, are immured in the inner apartments, out of the sight of strangers; so that, when visiting the male sex, I was usually desired to stop at the door while my conductor drove the females to their recesses within. But as this injunction was not always regarded, I generally discovered some sly peepers lagging behind near the doors, or indulging their curiosity through a curtain. When called to visit women patients, however, all the females of the family were usually assembled in the apartment, and as here my curiosity could not be balked, I examined them minutely.

They are generally slight figures, not inelegantly made; and, during my stay in their rooms, commonly reclined on couches. Their features are good, of a light-brown colour, and a few of their faces might be justly deemed handsome; they were, however, of the pensive cast; a certain delicacy and langour, arising from indolence, pervading the whole. From confinement and constitutional inactivity combined, they may be considered plants of the most tender texture—productions of art rather than of nature—the delicate, though interesting growth of hot-houses, rather than the hardy produce of the fields. The mind must partake of this want of energy in the frame, for as one is weak, so is the other a waste; as neither have been cultivated, so neither can be productive. They occupy their time principally with toys, ornaments, and dress, as their household cares, from constant seclusion, are inconsiderable. Few were reserved in their manners; some conversed by means of an interpreter, and none in their own apartments were veiled, notwithstanding the jealousy entertained of Europeans.

I was naturally an object of continual remark and observation to my fair patients. My dress, colour, and behaviour, were minutely scrutinized, and continual whispering and tittering, with occasional affectation of gravity, marked the group to be so perfectly feminine, that I began to conclude myself among some boarding-school misses of a more civilized country. The earnest gaze of these fair creatures, with their smiles, was almost enviable, had it not been doubtful whether it arose from admiration or ridicule. To do justice to my own modesty, I concluded it the latter. In the house of a man of some consequence, (the king's secretary, I believe.) were several women, two of whom seemed in a situation soon to be-

come mothers and one of these professed to be the patient. I found, however, she was not very ill; for curiosity seemed the prevailing motive for requiring my attendance. They were both, indeed, gay, lively lasses, not at all diffident, and did not by any means, like some of the others, view me as the uncaged tenant of a menagerie. During the momentary absence of the master of the mansion, one of the prettiest took my hand to examine it, and I could do no less than kiss hers in return. Far from being offended, the lady seemed as if she would not dislike a still warmer repetition of the salute, but just at that moment the trusty guardian of the castle returned. I must add, however, that my presence was not always tolerated. An elderly damsel, who was, no doubt, perfectly secure from any assaults of mine, could not be prevailed upon to see me. At first I rather maliciously refused to prescribe before examining the patient in person, expecting, by this means, to overcome her fears; but they proved too strong to be conquered.

The town is the very mimic of a European fortified place, but aped as a monkey imitates man. From the sea it appears small and dull; but, on entering the gate, we were surprised at being unexpectedly placed in a crowded, bustling place, apparently populous, and about a mile and a half in circumference. It is surrounded by a wall fifteen feet high and two thick, seemingly of ancient date, as it possesses little strength. A few small turrets, badly constructed, afford loop-holes for musketry, and also some small guns, that are almost useless from age and neglect. On the top of the wall loose stones are placed in readiness to hurl upon an enemy that should attempt to storm.

The streets, I have before observed, are narrow, and in some places lined by dead walls, which appear to be the remains of houses now in ruins: the better sort which remain are built of stone; the others of reeds, mats, and bamboos. The former are each fortifications in themselves, the outer door generally leading through a narrow passage into an open, quadrangular area, from which are entrances to the different apartments, and these receive light and air by the same means. The innermost, devoted to the use of the women, are often close and almost dark, and here they fly upon the approach of strangers. In a mere hut, having only one apartment, half of which was screened off for the female, I had some difficulty in discovering the patient, till assisted by the husband; and concealment seemed such a point of delicacy, that we had some difficulty in bringing her to the light. The population is evidently diminished: the ruins and dead walls are proofs

of this; but the latter may be partly intended for protection against musketry, to which the town has been often exposed. At present the number of inhabitants, including slaves, may amount to nearly three thousand souls.

Behind the town is a high hill, completely overlooking it, occupied by a kind of rude castle, or fortification, mounting twelve four-pounders. The Madegasses, in one of their invasions, having laid siege to the town, seized this position, and, by means of musketry, rendered it dangerous for any one to appear in the streets below, during the day. On their retreat, the natives erected the present work, which, like most others, is looped for musketry, this being, in their opinions, much the safest mode of fighting. The architecture, however, is so wretched, that some of the walls nod over their bases, and seem retained together so slightly, as to threaten a speedy fall. The hill is nearly perpendicular; the ascent to the castle on the summit consists of stone steps, about 200 in number, evidently a work of considerable labour, and enclosed by walls. The guns are mostly unserviceable from neglect, and, being mounted on broken carriages, cannot be aimed were they even in better order. Several were lying altogether on the ground, thrown from their beds in the ceremony of saluting Captain Beaver in the morning. It is surprising that none burst in this operation: but, indeed, the natives are so much in dread of the engine, and keep at such a respectful distance when discharged, that no great injury is likely to accrue. The hill itself is overlooked by another, but too far distant to command either this work, or the town, by musketry.

A small river, supplying the inhabitants with water, runs past the western extremity of the latter. For the defence of this necessary article during an invasion, a work has been erected still further to the westward, which, upon the alarm of an enemy, is immediately occupied. It is thus protected on both sides,—a very necessary precaution, as the greatest distress has been occasioned in former sieges, by thirst. On the opposite side of the island is another town, also defended by walls, but neither so large nor so populous as this. A third existed some years ago, about three miles to the eastward of the present capital, and walled like the others; but it was taken by the Madegasses, and totally destroyed: many of the inhabitants being killed in the contest, and the remainder, of every age and sex, carried into slavery. The ruins are still to be seen.

Johanna, August 27.

Next morning the sultan, attended by all his principal officers and grandees, came on-board, and, after taking coffee,

proceeded round the decks, inquiring the uses of every thing he saw, and standing by to see a great gun fired. This ceremony, however, seemed somewhat alarming to the royal nerves; but the whole party were not only still more frighted, but nearly put to flight, by the distant view of a pig which appeared struggling for liberty in the stye. These creatures they hold in the utmost detestation, much amusement being excited by their rencontres with the natives from the waggery of the seamen. Bombay Jack equally feared them, but enjoyed the embarrassment of his countrymen, who, in dread of contamination, fled from them in the utmost terror. Several messages came from my fair patients during the morning, with kind inquiries after my health, appetite, and slumber. These form the usual routine of Johannese compliments, and I placed them to the account of the husbands, who were usually the bearers. Two or three even begged to see me to breakfast or dinner; others, in token of acknowledgment, sent presents of mats, cocoa-nuts, or fruit, which, of course, I would not accept without payment.

We accompanied the king to the shore, who, on quitting the ship, was saluted with nine guns. He seemed in great good-humour with the presents, which followed in another boat. These consisted of 100 muskets and their appendages, ten barrels of powder, 10,000 musket-ball cartridges, two brass swivels, 100 rounds of ball, the same of blank-cartridge, beside flints, and other things of less value. Captain Beaver also gave him a compass and a quadrant, of which the natives have a slight knowledge, in order to guide his majesty to Mecca, whither he wished to go, like all good Musselmen, to insure his eternal salvation, Muskets and ammunition were also distributed among the great men, according to their rank. A little liberality of this kind is not misapplied. Sir John Cradock deserves the highest praise, for so promptly supplying the means by which they may be enabled to oppose a ferocious and inveterate enemy. Indeed, policy, as well as humanity, required this, as it will insure the utmost attention to the English vessels that touch here in future, and the attachment of the people toward us has been so often marked as to deserve this return.

You may be assured the worthy little ambassador was not forgotten in the material article of presents. He was, however, very disinterested. He refused several gifts offered by individuals, under the idea that the deprivation to themselves might be productive of inconvenience, and the only request was, that a written testimony of our approbation should be left with him. In procuring supplies of beef, vegetables, and

other refreshments for the crew, his zeal and good-nature were unremitting. These supplies were furnished gratuitously at the public expence, the sultan having declared that payment should not be received for any thing required for the ship during her stay; and this resolution was pertinaciously adhered to. Bombay Jack seemed to have not only the trouble of collecting them from different parts of the island, but we had some reasons to believe, frequently added his own mite to the public contribution. It was vain, however, to remonstrate against either his or the public generosity; they seemed to forget their poverty in the fullness of their gratitude: indeed, we are at present seriously inconvenienced by these civilities, for Captain B. and the officers intending to lay in a sufficient stock for the remainder of the cruize, declined it on discovering the terms on which it was to be supplied; but our good old friend hearing this determination, immediately fell on his knees to the former, declaring he would not rise till permitted to supply our wants; it became necessary, therefore, to request a few trifles, in order to silence his importunity. "English," said he, "give me every thing, now me give to the English." The most labourd effusion of eloquence could not express more.

The Comoro islands, situated about 180 miles to the north-west of the great island of Madagascar, and about the same distance from the continent of Africa, are four in number. Their names are Comoro, Johanna, or Anjuan, Mayotta, and Mohilla. They were first discovered by the Portuguese, who found them subject to the Arabs or Moors (for the terms are considered synonimous here) of the continent. In a few years they came into the hands of the discoverers, who soon resigning an empty honour, the sovereignty devolved on a descendant of the original possessors, and since that period they have been independent. They lie nearly in the direct route of what is called the inner passage to India, and furnish refreshments to the ships. During peace they are much frequented, but more rarely in war, except by fleets, as the French cruizers sometimes lurked in this quarter. They have a fine climate, and generally a good soil, which, with attention, supplies all the riches of the tropics. The people, however, are poor; they have little for commerce except cocoa-nut oil, rice, some tortoise-shell from Mohilla, and refreshments, the former of which are principally taken by the Arabian traders from the Persian Gulph, who leave, in return, coarse cloths, mats, and other articles. From the English ships, in exchange for bullocks, poultry, and vegetables, they receive specie, or whatever their wants require.

Comoro, which gives name to the group, is the largest and most mountainous, but not so fertile, it is said, as the others. The interior is very little known to Europeans, and, fortunately, as little to its enemies; and, probably, by its rugged surface, as well as the abrupt nature of the coast, has been preserved from the Madegasse invasions. About sixty years ago it was usually visited by English shipping, in the manner Johanna now is, but possessing no safe anchorage, became deserted for the latter, and at the same time the seat of government, which had been always there, was also changed. The people were then less civilized, and more suspicious of Europeans than latterly, which occasioned several acts of violence. At present this is never the case; but the natives of this island, as well as of Mayotta and Mohilla, having little intercourse with Europeans, are by no means so friendly as the Johannese. These islands are each subject to governors appointed by the sultan, whom they occasionally visit, to render an account of their administration.

Johanna, the next in size, being the royal residence, and the resort of Europeans, is now the first in importance. Its shape is somewhat triangular, being about twenty-six miles long, and, in the widest part, above twenty broad. The interior is generally high, rising gently from the sea; the soil is commonly good, but not well cultivated; the scenery, as far as we could distinguish, romantic, and throughout the year presenting a picture of continual verdure.

Industry has done so little for the island, that nature may be said to be the principal husbandman. However, rice, maize, yams, cocoa-nuts, plaintains, and a variety of tropical fruits, are produced in abundance; wild honey is found in the woods. The specimens that I saw of sugar-canes promised fairly, which, as well as coffee, pepper, and cloves, might enrich the natives if properly cultivated. Bullocks, goats, poultry, and land-tortoise are numerous; but sheep, swine, horses, mules, asses, and dogs have not been introduced, or at least not preserved. One of the natives, seeing a drawing of a spirited charger, asked me many questions respecting its various qualities, and seemed astonished by hearing of the facility with which it was brought under the dominion of man. The species of monkey called mongoos is found in the woods, of which we have several on-board; the tail forms a beautiful bush, but the animals are said to be of too delicate a texture to survive the rigours of a northern climate; the common species of monkey are numerous, but the people seem to dislike them. Parrots are also plentiful, but not celebrated for their mimic powers.

We have often asked about natural curiosities, to which Bombay Jack has as repeatedly replied, there were none, or any place deserving of particular notice, except we considered the mountains such. Whether he understood our meaning correctly, is, perhaps, matter of doubt; and, beside, an object familiar by time, and frequent observation to himself, might not be thought peculiarly interesting to us; but had there been any thing of this description, probably we should have heard of it. An excursion to the interior, however, would have been interesting had our time permitted; but Captain B——, however, is anxious to prosecute the further objects of his voyage; for which, present curiosity is, from necessity, sacrificed to his own as well as our regret.

Besides refreshments, they sell straw-hats to the seamen, and mats, made of white or party-coloured straw; but the finer sort, and which are sometimes pretty and very neatly executed, come either from Madagascar, or the Island of Monfia, on the coast of Zanzibar. Their knowledge in metals extends little further than the formation of trinkets for their women. Unlike most islanders, they do not seem fond of the water; they have, indeed, some large boats, but we saw only the rotten remains of two, about fifteen or twenty tons burthen each; and their canoes, though skilfully managed, seemed indifferently put together. The sultan has a guard, at all times, in his palace; but, in seasons of necessity, every man becomes a soldier, and, to facilitate this purpose, arms are kept in the principal houses for immediate distribution. They chew areca and betel, like the Asiatics, and offer it to strangers as we do snuff; this custom, I believe, is not general in the other African islands, or on the continent. Diseases are confined to a slight cold or fever, for which simples are prescribed by the priests, but the medical art is at the lowest ebb; simple habits, temperance, and the climate, form the grand and surest restoratives. The measles, however, were introduced some years ago and made considerable havoc.

There are two distinct races of people, those of Moorish or Arabian descent, and another apparently mixed and somewhat darker in colour; to these may be added some negroes, who are slaves. The sultan and all the principal people belong to the former class; their features are marked and expressive, and in many might be termed handsome; we saw none either disagreeable or deformed. It is difficult to form an estimate of the population of the island, as neither the king nor any of his ministers seem acquainted with the subject. No data, as we were told, are kept for this purpose, and more than one, whom I asked respecting the cause, replied, with great

simplicity, that it was not thought necessary to count the people. From all the information we could gain, it is probable the greatest number of souls falls short of six thousand.

Before the island became subject to invasions and wars, it was, however, equally flourishing and populous; but since that disastrous period, has seriously declined. Bombay Jack has said, that it once contained three walled towns and more than 350 villages, or, as he termed them, bush-towns, besides abundance of people. Abbé Raynal speaks of it as a spot where, nature combining all her riches, with her simplicity, gave support to 30,000 inhabitants, distributed in seventy-three villages. The same author relates, that an Arab, who committed murder at Mosambique, threw himself into a boat, which drifted to the Comoro Islands, and becoming distinguished there for his talents, soon acquired the sovereignty, which his descendants still retained. We could not, however, gain any elucidation of this story. The crown, from what we can learn, appears to be partly elective in the family, devolving upon whoever possesses the greatest share of experience and abilities. By this law of succession, Sultan Allahwy came to the throne on the death of his uncle, and as no struggles for power seem to have occurred, this arrangement is probably satisfactory. Nature certainly never meant these simple people for warriors; her intentions were quite opposite; all their habits, manners, and ideas, shrink from scenes of turbulence and contention, except when compelled, by dire necessity, to contend for their very existence. Perhaps, had a bolder front and more personal resolution been opposed to the first invaders of their island, it would not have been subject to such frequent and dreadful ravages.

I have frequently alluded to these depredations of the natives of Madagascar upon the Comoro Islands, and which, in many respects, form a very remarkable portion of the history of the latter. That a nation of savages, nearly ignorant of navigation and of the military art, should have assembled fleets and armies under our eyes during many years past, committed themselves to the ocean, and attacked and ravaged distant islands, is so strange an event in modern history as scarcely to be believed.

It will appear still more extraordinary, when we consider that this has been done in the route of successive English fleets, and in the immediate vicinity of several European colonies, one of which has been itself a sufferer. One would think that Europeans were descending here in the scale of importance; and that these black buccaneers were imitating the ancient feats of the whites in the west, or of their friends and

progenitors, the pirates in the east, who found refuge in the island for nearly a century; as they do not yield in spirit or firmness to either; for, with infinitely less knowledge and fewer means, they have been equally daring and successful. The supineness of the Portuguese in not punishing these audacities, is scarcely matter of surprise; for their age of heroes is over, and the government is so philosophically patient, that insult is no longer considered infamous. The French had, perhaps, less reason to be active in this cause, though two of their vessels have been cut off and their crews murdered within the last ten years; but then the island furnished supplies to their colonies, and the depopulation of Johanna would be detrimental to the English. We have not yet, however, though frequently solicited, extended our protecting arm to the Comoro group in an effectual manner, for a few gifts of powder or muskets, from chance visitors, constituted the sum of our assistance till the present moment.

From the few lights afforded by ancient geographers, it would seem that the existence of Madagascar was rather conjectured than ascertained in Europe, till a late period. It was, however, early familiar to the Arabs, who, having possessed the coast of the continent, found it no difficult matter to acquire the dominion of the islands. The western shore of Madagascar, being contiguous to the main, is supposed to have been subdued and governed by Arabian chiefs long before the middle ages of Europe; the eastern, probably, being more remote and out of the track of their shipping, continued independent. But many traces of Arabian customs, names, and language, remain throughout the island; and, besides forming the residence of numbers of that nation, a commercial intercourse existed between it and different parts of the Red Sea and the Persian Gulph, which continues to the present day. This intercourse is of very remote date. The knowledge of it, in all probability, first led Bruce to conceive, that the fleets of Solomon, by stretching a little farther to the southward, had found the coast of Sofala, which, from producing some portion of gold, he assumes to be the ancient Ophir. According to Bombay Jack, who has traversed a large portion of the western coast, numbers of Arabs reside there, engaged in commercial pursuits; and others are descended from ancestors likewise settled on the coast from time immemorial; added to which, many of the native chiefs boast, as a great honour, of a similar origin.

It appears singular, that this island should have totally escaped the notice of De Gama, both in his outward and homeward-bound passages; for the first discovery seems to have been about 1506 and 1507, by the Portuguese; but no settle-

ment appears to have been attempted till many years afterwards, when the French East-India Company, desirous of securing a place of refreshment for their Indian shipping, and a strong hold in the Indian ocean, first began to colonize, under the direction of M. Flacourt. This, however, failed, after the expenditure of large sums, and a trial of several years. Succeeding attempts, though repeatedly made during a century and a half afterwards, down to the last under Benyowsky, have been equally unsuccessful. These failures arose from a diversity of causes. The principal were the spirit and firmness of the natives, assisted by intrigues and clashing interests at home, the jealousy of the people of Mauritius, the consequent loss of the large sums already expended upon that island, neglect to conciliate the natives, the choice of unhealthy positions, added to insufficient means afforded by the mother-country. The few posts, therefore, held till lately were by sufference of the natives; they were only for the convenience of trade, neither trenching on the power of the chiefs, nor assuming claims to any portion of territory. And this will be the most prudent step for us, or any other European power in the vicinity to pursue, except schemes of colonization should be formed on a very extensive, firm, and conciliating plan; and that this has not been done by some of the powers of Europe is surprising, considering the capabilities of the island. For Madagascar is in itself such a magnificent country; its outline so commanding, its extent so considerable, its resources so varied and extensive, in all the vast essentials requisite to constitute a great kingdom, that it is amazing it has not been more firmly grasped and held by France, who, by means of its energies, judiciously directed, might have rendered many of our advantages in India nugatory. The natives have no less reason, perhaps, to rejoice at this omission than ourselves, for they would have been the severest sufferers; but it is certain they would not have submitted without long and desperate struggles.

In so large an island, extending nearly 900 miles in length, by 250 in breadth, the people must be nearly as varied as the surface of the country. Accordingly, we find innumerable tribes but slightly connected, differing in character, manners, and privileges, and in colour varying, from the jet-black of the negro with his features, to pale-olive with the countenance of the Arab. In general there are some great leading divisions, or nations, formed of tribes with various shades of difference. The subordinate tribes are governed by their own chiefs, wholly or nearly independent, and each possessing its nobles, priests, and a species of hereditary slaves, who were originally either prisoners of war, or born to this unhappy lot by the

crimes of their forefathers. Baker, one of the black men elsewhere alluded to as a fit guide to explore the island, now a seaman on-board the Nisus, says he was a prisoner-of-war when sold to the French,—and to my question, whether he could find the way to his own country if put on shore on the island, replied yes, just as we should do in England.

Among other tribes in Madagascar, some strange stories have been told of a nation of dwarfs, called Kimos, residing in a large fertile valley, surrounded by inaccessible mountains, rich in every article of life, avoiding intercourse with the other natives, peaceable and unoffending, but vigorous in repulsing aggression and opposing intruders. Particular descriptions have been given of their persons, features, marriages, mode of life, and manner of repelling enemies. This fiction, gravely told by the natives, is evidently of Arabian origin; and embellished by the warmth and vigour of an eastern imagination, might form an interesting supplement to the tales of The Thousand and One. It is, however, singular, that Flacourt, Commerson, and other writers of credit, should seriously repeat these fables with seeming belief in their truth. One of these writers, I forget which, speaks of having seen some of these people, whose stature did not exceed three feet, and, in addition to much more of the marvellous, that in former times they used to contend in vast armies with the other islanders. It is possible, indeed, that there may be a tribe of this description, something resembling the Bosjesmans of southern Africa; but on questioning Bombay Jack on this subject, he very unceremoniously termed the whole story—"*a lie.*"

The contending interests and passions of so many different tribes, feebly held together, produce almost perpetual wars in the island. On these occasions the disjointed elements unite under one chief, whose immediate power expires with the war; and the different nations, assuming the cause their interests or desires point out, commence hostilities. These contests, though destructive to cattle and grain, are seldom of long continuance. At other times village wars with village, and district with district, under their immediate chiefs. When internal peace, however, threatens to rust their arms, this turbulent and warlike spirit bursts forth into foreign expeditions, at which period domestic feuds and jarring passions of every description are absorbed in the universal desire of plunder, for friends and enemies combine with a celerity unknown to other savages. At this time the Comoro islands frequently become exposed to their fearful visitations, sometimes extending to the continent about Cape Delgado, or between that and Mosambique; and once they were driven, by a change of wind, to the southward of that settlement; but,

alarmed at the dangers of this situation, returned without doing material injury. Where they once fix, however, their ravages become dreadful. The Huns and Vandals were not such scourges to Europe; every thing, animate and inanimate, is swept away from the earth; a fertile country becomes a wilderness; and the people, doomed to the condition of slaves, are carried off with the rest of the plunder. Their acquaintance with Johanna is of no more ancient date than 1786, and owing to Benyowsky, who had little idea of the curse he was unintentionally entailing on an innocent people. Suspecting the destination of his ship, when piratically seized by the master and supercargo,* to be this island, he dispatched two Europeans and several natives in an open boat, with letters to the king to detain her; but it was too late, as she had sailed for Mosambique. This was the first personal knowledge acquired of Johanna by the Madegasses, and they have not forgotten the way thither.

When an expedition of this kind is contemplated, some leading chiefs assume the general arrangement and command. After apportioning their own quotas, they wait upon others, provided with cords formed of the skin and fibres of wild animals, upon which knots are made according to the number of canoes and men each district means to supply, and this is considered a public obligation of the most binding description in warlike affairs. The period chosen for the expedition is the months of August, September, or October; the place of rendezvous the bay of Bembatoke, in the north-east portion of the island; nearly the whole are armed with muskets, supplied by French or Arab traders; but, fortunately, they are yet unable to manage cannon. If the numbers assembled be very considerable, they divide into two parties, taking different destinations; the evening is the time usually chosen to set out, in order to steer by the stars; the wind, likewise, at this season of the year is favourable to their enterprize; but should it change when at sea, they proceed straight forward across the channel, aware of reaching some part of the main; it matters not where; for as enemies only are profitable, they admit of no friends. According to the phraseology of Bombay Jack and the king, their greatest enemies are the people of *Bembatoke*, *Bissemsark*, and *Sukaliva;* the latter, probably, are the Seclaves, mentioned by Benyowsky as capable of furnishing forty thousand fighting men; a number which, from the different accounts we can collect, is, probably, not much exaggerated.

When destined to the Comoro group, which receives a more

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* Vide Memoirs and Travels of Count de Benyowsky, 2 vols. 4to. Lond.

than ordinary share of persecution, the fleet is first observed from Valentine's Peak, a high hill in Mayotta, where continual watch is kept during the season of danger. An immediate alarm is excited by means of a large fire, and at the same time notice is sent to Johanna. The inhabitants there hurry with their families to the towns. Arms are distributed, and provisions laid in for a siege, while every face wears the aspect of apprehension, distress, and dismay. Part of the invaders, in the mean time, invest the towns, while others scour the country for provisions and plunder. Sometimes the sieges are constant; at others, forming only an occasional blockade; and in the former case, as the Johannese can seldom provide adequate supplies, hundreds of women and children perish by hunger and thirst. When provisions fall short among the besiegers, and the resistance continues vigorous, they retire with what plunder and prisoners they can collect; numbers of the people having been thus carried off, and, indeed, had it not been for the resistance of the towns, not a soul would have been left to tell the story.

The Johannese made prisoners in these expeditions have been usually enslaved. The captured Madegasses, however, on the other hand, were put to death; the only excuse for which, perhaps, is the timid character of these islanders, who involuntarily shudder at the name of the enemy. When censured for this cruelty, Bombay Jack replied, by asking whether we would not deprive a snake in the grass of life, that lay in wait to take ours? To another question why they did not march out and meet the enemy in the field, he shrewdly made no other reply than by questions in return.—Why do not the English march to Paris?—Why does not Bonaparte go to London?—He had a brother once carried off into slavery, and, to the credit of his fraternal affection, be it remembered, he proceeded to Madagascar, and purchased the freedom of the captive. It was at this time, and during other similar excursions, that he had means of acquiring considerable information respecting the state of the western shore of that extraordinary island.

The force of the Madegasses, on a war-expedition of this kind, varies considerably; for, as already mentioned, if the army be large, it separates into two divisions, in order to assail different places. The governor of Mosambique stated the amount, in general, at about 5,000 men. Bombay Jack does not enumerate by thousands, but says, the number of canoes is commonly little short of 300, each containing, upon an average, about thirty men, which would make the total number above 8,000. Fear may have possibly exaggerated their numbers among the Johannese. We have been, however, repeat-

edly assured from the same authority, that they can raise 1000 canoes, if necessary, and man them with experienced warriors, though, perhaps, no force to this amount ever actually quitted the island. This statement receives confirmation from our passenger, Mons. S——, before noticed, as well as from the captain of his vessel, who we saw at Mosambique. The latter had made seventeen voyages to Madagascar, in one of which, while near Bembatoke, he saw nearly the whole surface of the bay covered by canoes, and more than 40,000 people, men, women, and children, assembled preparatory to an expedition. On a further view this will not appear improbable, when we consider the population of the island; for the lowest estimate makes it 2,000,000, and if we conclude one-sixth to be capable of bearing arms, which is probably less than the real proportion among people in an uncivilized state, surprise at their numbers will vanish. Johanna, at the period of the great invasion, had, according to its reported populousness, at least three or four thousand men in arms; and the Madegasses having driven them to the towns, and kept possession of the country, may be fairly estimated at double that number. What will some of the politicians in England think of this? Thirty years ago we thought it vast things to send out an expedition of 10,000 men: how mortifying to be told we were even then excelled, in numbers at least, by African savages!

The last attack of these marauders took place about five years ago, though not in such force as formerly. Shortly afterwards Vaheeni, the Queen of Bembatoke, a powerful princess, and an inveterate foe to Johanna, died. She was a personage of great note in this part of the world, quite a Semiramis on a confined scale, and, like a late celebrated prototype in the north of Europe, equally known for her conquests and gallantries, her wisdom and vices; though, in the latter respect, it is doubtful whether the African female equalled her cotemporary. Many curious stories are told of her government and gallants, and, in fact, the histories of these small-scale wars, and invasions, and sovereigns, seem fully as wicked and ambitious as any of their more powerful brethren in Europe. There is some more Johanna scandal about the Madagascar rulers, but not worth repeating. Queen Vaheeni is enough for the present. I should not, however, omit stating, that, on her death, several candidates started up for the crown, which occasioned a civil war, and gave full employment to the turbulent and restive spirits of the island at home. By the late arrival of an Arab trader at Johanna, it appears this contest is concluded; our friends, therefore, begin to calculate, with sad forebodings, on the probability of an attack next year;

and they are much to be pitied. The king and people seem thankful for what we have done, but naturally wish us, if possible, to do more; to prevent the invaders from coming, rather than to conquer them when there. They left us with great regret. Bombay Jack took leave with unaffected sorrow. We all felt a strong partiality toward this man of nature; his apparent attachment and good sense, and the curious mixture of quickness and simplicity by which he was distinguished, had many claims on our regard. He seemed equally unwilling to quit those by whom he had been caressed and esteemed; but at last departed in his little canoe, with a silent tear struggling in his eye, and an aspect that frequently cast "a longing, lingering look behind." Adieu. We have been at sea for some time, steering toward the African continent as fast as a light wind will permit.

Quiloa, September 4.

The second night after quitting Johanna, we saw a large fire on the main, to the southward of Cape Delgado. These are frequent on the whole of the eastern coast, and seem intended either to frighten wild beasts, or to open the country by destroying the woods. Next day we ran along a low, woody shore, guarded by breakers, and several islets, studded here and there with villages. At the mouth of a considerable river, named Mongallou, a small fort displayed a flag, that was at a distance taken for French. On a nearer approach to the supposed enemy, it was found to be Arab, and we stood off again, to avoid dangers nigh the shore. An assemblage of huts appeared near the fort, and one or two canoes attempted to come off to the ship, but we would not delay. Before arriving at Mongallou, it is necessary to pass Cape Delgado, the boundary of the Portuguese dominion, a low, indistinct point of land, rarely distinguishable at even a short distance, and we could not therefore, though not far off, perceive it. The appearance of the whole of this shore is woody, intermixed with occasional patches of verdure, and of sand, without culture, and generally destitute of inhabitants. In the evening we passed the mouth of the river Lindy, which is said by our passenger, Mons. S——, to be large, and its banks well inhabited, for the convenience of communicating with the interior. The people, like those of Mongallou, and of other places in the vicinity, little known to Europeans, trade with the Arabs from Zanzibar, for slaves, ivory, and wax. Next morning we discovered the entrance to this magnificent harbour, first entered by the discoverers of India, and after some delay, and one or two alarms, from reefs of rocks, near the

entrance, anchored at noon. It is almost new ground to English enterprize and inquiry. The sultan, or king of the country, has hitherto heard of us only as enemies, and felt the report to be partly true in the loss of his trade with the French, particularly the traffic in slaves. Quiloa, however, is well known to history, by the deeds and memory of the former heroes of Portugal.

The harbour so named, situated in the continent of Africa, is formed by an indentation of the sea of considerable breadth, and about seven miles in depth. This bay is cut in two by the island of Quiloa, extending from the sea nearly to the bottom, being about six miles long, and between two and three broad, and therefore lying something like an arrow on a bow, except that a shallow boat-passage runs between its inner extremity and the main, thus uniting what otherwise would be two distinct harbours; that on the northern side of the island we have only seen at a distance; it has never been frequented by the French traders, who were the only visitors, and the natives say it is unfit for large ships, being obstructed by sand-banks. The southern, in which we are now lying, is a beautiful expanse of water, having several islets, and ramifications of the grand basin, deep enough for the largest ships, and capable of containing nearly the whole navy of England. At the bottom is an arm running about twenty miles into the country, and said to be navigable for boats; but it has not yet been examined. From the northern harbour proceeds a similar branch, extending about fifteen or sixteen miles, which we have examined with some degree of interest, not having been before visited by Europeans. Between these arms the main forms a small peninsula, jutting toward the inner or western end of Quiloa island, separated only by the shallow passage already mentioned, and which, at low water, being nearly uncovered, almost forms an isthmus, connecting them together.

On this end of the island is situated the town of Quiloa, once a place of great importance, and the capital of an extensive kingdom, but now a petty village. De Gama found it walled, and built of stone; the king powerful, the inhabitants rich, numerous, and civilized, possessing constant intercourse and trade with Arabia and the Persian gulph. Cabral proceeding to India after his discovery of Brazil, visited Quiloa in 1500. In 1502 De Gama, in his second voyage, forced the king of Quiloa to promise an annual tribute to Portugal of 2,000 crowns of gold, which, on his return to Lisbon, and triumphal entry, was carried before him in procession, in a large silver basin. Almeida, in his voyage out as viceroy of

India, also called here; and Ibrahim, the then reigning sovereign, refusing the tribute so unjustly exacted, was driven out, and Mahomet put in his place. A Portuguese governor and garrison were also left to keep the people in subjection, but in a few years were withdrawn, for India was nobler game, and claimed all their force and exertion, both in courage and talents, to retain. The greatness of Quiloa, however, was irrecoverably gone. The very touch of the Portuguese was death. It drooped never to recover. Its independence and prosperity expired together; for beside the loss of several dependencies, which produced a considerable revenue, the people had not only to encounter the arms, but the superior commercial knowledge of the Europeans, which gradually destroyed their trade. Like other cities then on this coast, said to be flourishing and populous, it sunk from civilization, wealth, and power, into insignificance, poverty, and barbarism.

For nearly three centuries afterwards, Quiloa seemed forgotten, except by the Arabs, who, wandering along this coast, occasionally visited it, bartering the arms, and some of the wares of Europe and India, at an enormous profit. About the commencement of the American war, however, an adventurer from the isle of France touched here on a commercial speculation. The sultan highly rejoiced at the prospect of a direct intercourse with Europeans, received him well, promoted his views, and he soon returned with a full cargo of slaves and ivory, in exchange for arms, ammunition, tobacco, and some dollars. This success encouraged others. Several large vessels arrived from France to carry slaves to Java, and other parts of the East, as well as to their own and the Spanish West-Indies. A frigate was also dispatched from Mauritius, to form a permanent commercial treaty with the sultan. This agreement fixed the price of prime slaves at thirty-two dollars, or about £8 sterling per head—a most compendious method of raising men, which, I am surprized, none of the promoters of war in Europe have thought of. I marvel that Napoleon has not hit upon such a cheap scheme for raising an army to attack, or at least to frighten, us in India. Here are the essential materials at hand, ready cut and dried for the drill-serjeant, less troublesome than the conscription at home, easily supplied, paid, and victualled, and far more conveniently placed, you will admit, than even by a march from Cairo to Calcutta!

The sultan, however, though so cheap a dealer in men, was not long suffered to enjoy a monopoly in the human shambles. He was attacked, and made tributary, shortly after the

treaty, by the Imaum of Muscat, who had, for some time, a longing eye to his profits. This sovereign, who is not very familiar to European ears, rules the rich and commercial town of that name near the entrance of the Persian gulph, and also Omon, and some other provinces of Arabia. His subjects are esteemed the mildest, most civilized, commercial, and adventurous of the Arab race. By trading with Quiloa, the weakness of that kingdom became known, and the Imaum dispatched a force that reduced the islands of Zanzibar, Pemba, Monfia, and ultimately Quiloa itself, leaving the king in possession of his authority on the continent, but exacting the better part of his revenue by means of governors and garrisons. The islands, however, were altogether detached from the Quiloan kingdom, to which they had belonged from its first foundation, a period, the natives boast, of above 1,200 years.

The Imaum, in the division of territories, retained Zanzibar and Pemba himself, but made a gift of Monfia and Quiloa to his brother Sadi Ali, who, though resident at the latter place as governor, farms the revenue to a merchant named Abdallah, who is also governor of Monfia. The sum produced annually by these two places, varies between 12,000 and 20,000 dollars. This is raised by duties on imports and exports, and presents for permission to trade, which are expected as regularly as the duties. Slaves pay a duty of eight dollars each. The sultan seems to have little other emolument than what he may gain, like any other merchant, in the way of trade. The Arabs save him the trouble of collecting revenues, otherwise he is so far independent as to have the honour and trouble of a kingdom, without the substantial profits attached to it. Few kings, I believe, admire this division of things, and Sultan Yousoufou, for so he is named, no more than others. Though poor in pocket, however, he is rich in the pride of ancestry. His pedigree may vie with some of the "families before the flood," of Wales or Scotland, and, though entirely destitute of soldiers, talks of driving out the Arabs with ease, if they would not have the assurance to return.

The kingdom is said to have extended, in former times, from Mombaza, on the north, to the confines of Sofala, occupying nearly fourteen degrees of latitude. This, however, seems by no means proved from any documents we possess. A general connection, rather than subjection, one to another, seems to have held the different governments together, having one common origin, customs, and language. The present limits are confined between Mombaza and Cape Delgado, a space of about 350 miles. Its authority seems confined

to the coast, being girt in the rear by thick forests, a few miles from the shore, which interrupt communication with the interior. The villages are pretty numerous, the banks of the rivers also well inhabited, for the convenience of trading with the natives more inland; but the country is far from populous. Quiloa Island, the seat of the monarchy, contains between two and three thousand persons, but the main, for several miles around, has not, so far as we have had an opportunity of judging, five hundred more. Gangarra, about twenty miles to the northward, besides Mongallou and Lindy rivers, each possesses more than double these numbers. The total population, however scattered and thin, as it is in many districts, cannot be estimated with any tolerable degree of precision, though Mons. S—, who has been often here, thinks it may be about 50,000. The people are descendants of the Arabs, who penetrated along the whole eastern coast as far as Cape Corrientes at an early period. These migrations seem to have been made in considerable numbers; cities were built, kingdoms erected, trade fostered and extended to different parts of India, and the people even considerably civilized when the Europeans first appeared. At present the natives bear the same features of face, but without the least portion of that energy of character by which their ancestors were distinguished. The higher classes were still pure; the lower, mixed with a portion of the true African race, inclining to the negro in features and colour. From constant intercourse with the French, the majority speak that language tolerably well, but there is also an established interpreter, paid by those who require his assistance. In Zanzibar, we are told, that language is generally understood.

So far as we have had opportunities of judging, the main land is very poor in natural productions. This seems the general character of the country; the soil is bound up with underwood, or arid, except in the vicinity of rivers or arms of the sea, which occasionally overflow the banks. Quiloa Island is tolerably fertile, producing rice, yams, cocoa-nuts, plaintains, and contains several species of the antelope; but we have seen neither bullocks nor poultry. Morice Islet, situated near the bottom of the harbour, and named after the first adventurer from Mauritius, is barren and uninhabited. The main and the islands are thickly covered with wood, and so little elevated above the sea as to become overflowed to some distance from the shore at spring-tides.

In the rainy season this place is said to be unhealthy, which, from the low and woody ground collecting the vapours exhaled by the slime and moisture, and decay of vegetable

matter, is not unlikely. The rains do not commence before the end of November.

"Have you any further curiosity respecting African kings?" said Captain B——, after we had anchored; "if so, we will wait upon his majesty of Quiloa together."—I gladly embraced the opportunity, and in the evening we left the ship, an officer having been previously dispatched to announce the visit. The village is about five miles from the anchorage, situated around the western point of the island, and is, therefore, not visible till within a short distance. Our route led directly down to the bottom of the harbour, inclining, however, to the right, Quiloa Island being on the right, and Morice Isle and the main on the left.

We were received on the beach by a deputation of the principal people, among others by Formo Sani, the king's eldest son, a fine-looking young man, whose gait and manners were not without dignity, and Bona Teeboo, the royal secretary. To our regret it appeared the sultan was absent at Mongallou, the river we had passed the preceding day, where he had been for some months regulating the government. The Arab governor had also quitted Quiloa a few days before, on a visit to Zanzibar.

Captain B— mentioned his wishes, through Mons. S—, to receive the timber promised to the latter by the king, and to enter into a contract for a cargo of spars to be supplied in a few months, and for which a liberal price should be given. This proposition we expected would be complied with immediately, wood of this size being of little use to themselves; and, at a trifling expence of labour, would bring a revenue to the sultan almost sufficient to compensate for the loss of the slave-trade. After considerable discussion, however, the minister replied, there was no timber cut down, neither could he grant permission so to do, nor enter into a treaty for a future supply without the approbation of the sultan, whose arrival was daily expected. Delay at this moment, however, was inadmissible with our previous arrangements. But after much further argument, guides were promised for the succeeding morning to conduct our party to the spot where it grew, and we took our leave, accompanied by the prince, who seemed to favour our wishes, to the end of the village.

Quitting the ship next morning with three boats and forty men, a variety of fresh obstacles were started by the old minister, while Captain B— and I, during the interval, rambled through the greatest part of the village. It is larger than could be at first conjectured, extending from the shore inland, by winding foot-paths, between inclosures of plaintain, banana,

tamarind, and cocoa-nut trees. The huts are generally unconnected, and formed of these convenient materials, combined with bamboo, twigs, and thatch; foot-paths form the only streets, and abundant foliage gives it the appearance of a wood. We saw but two or three stone houses, one of which belongs to the sultan. It is a large irregular ill-built edifice, tolerably high, and partly surrounded with walls. I had penetrated through the court-yard to the outer door, when some females, looking carelessly out of a latticed window above, beckoned me not to enter. They seemed something darker in colour than my Johanna friends.

The remains of the wall that formerly encircled the town are still partially visible, though overgrown with weeds. We traced it to some distance; it has been above two feet thick, and seems to have inclosed a very considerable space. Captain B— justly remarked, as we walked along, turning the grass to one side, in following the line of the foundation, that the older writers gave such flattering accounts of the importance of this city in the days of De Gama, as, from present appearances, to be scarcely worthy of credit. The people were said to be numerous, civilized, and wealthy; the city extensive and fortified, its habitations elegant, and public buildings numerous. This picture, though partly true, was probably exaggerated, like some others of the early discoveries; yet there are several heaps of ruins.

The only other object worthy of notice is the fort, to which we afterwards proceeded. It was first erected by the natives, and has been since repaired by the Arabs; but bears evident marks of age, and I may add of decrepitude, though none whatever of skill in architecture or fortification. It is a rude effort of a rude people against enemies that could not be much more informed than themselves. The situation is near the water, and the shape may be termed a square, with a round tower at one of the angles, containing three small guns (two unserviceable) that overlook the town. The tower is the only defensible part; twenty Arabs from Muscat, armed with spears, constitute the garrison, one of whom accompanied us round; here also resides the Arab governor.

By this time Mons. S—— had returned, having, with the natural powers of a Frenchman, fairly out-talked the assembly, and prevailed on Formo Sani, and several attendants, to act as guides, with whom we set out. They formed a motley group of tall, athletic men, well featured, armed with swords, but very indifferently habited. Our route lay up the arm, sent inland by the northern harbour. The entrance is nearly opposite to the town, and soon dividing into two, we

followed the southern channel, about 100 yards broad, and meandering like a beautiful river. The shores are low and woody, frequently overflowed, and, in general, thickly lined with the mangrove. For three or four miles, the depth of water is sufficient for the largest ships, but the shoals at the entrance render this advantage nugatory, except to boats, being, at low water, an exposed bed of mud, intermixed with sand and coral. Scattered in the stream are several islets, covered with wood and verdure, arising from the water, as if fresh painted by the hand of nature. The sun yet shone mildly; not a curl appeared on the water, except what were produced by the boats; and it seemed, for a few moments, one of the enchanted lakes of fairy land.

While admiring this scene, one of the seamen uttered an exclamation of surprize, and pointed out four huge creatures playing in the water. The headmost boat paused, in order not to disturb their gambols. We also stopped, gazing in silent admiration, at their unwieldy bodies, which now and then appeared almost wholly out of the water. The animal was evidently the hippopotamus, or river-horse; sometimes, such is the contradiction in names, termed sea-cow, long the admiration of naturalists, and peculiar to the waters of Africa and parts of Asia. We did not attempt to fire, afraid of alarming others that were at no great distance; but as the boats approached they sunk. Detachments of three, four, five, or a greater number, appeared at short distances, during our progress. None were single; some being distinctly, others only partially, visible. From several good views, however, the colour appeared a light brown, bay, or dun; the body larger than that of a buffalo, the head, from the ears, seeming short, like that of a cropt terrier, on an enormous scale; the eyes large, projecting, and something of an orange colour. The legs attached to such a ponderous body, are short and thick; its motion on-shore is slow and unwieldy, though in the water sufficiently active.

About eleven o'clock, having proceeded twelve or thirteen miles into the heart of the country, we landed in a small recess formed by an angle in the stream. The ground, for several hundred yards, was soft and muddy, having been lately overflowed. At a short distance the country appeared an immense wood, the trees in general stunted and surrounded by underwood. The tracks of wild beasts on the soft mud were innumerable; not a foot of ground was without them. The feet of the hippopotamus, lion, leopard, thousands of the antelope species, and many others not immediately recognized, were distinctly marked. Of the leopard, called the

tiger of Africa, there were several traces; of the lion only one that was recent; but had our party not been so large, even a single neighbour of this kind would have been alarming. The sloughs formed by the clumsy feet and weight of the hippopotamus, in the soft ground, were remarkable, the different tracts and resemblances occupying all eyes, to whom the novelty was interesting. In the mean time, while some of the seamen pitched tents, and others were detached, armed, to take care of the boats, the prince led the way to the wood.

Several animals passed to the right, before we had gone many yards, and ran toward a close thicket, lining the stream. We had only a momentary view, but, though considerably larger, they seemed something of the hog species. The natives called them *Bangoo*, favouring of the hog and deer; but this is not likely. Captain B—— conjectured them to be a species of *tapir;* but afterwards remarked, that the latter animal is not met with out of South America. In a few minutes more, about a dozen very large creatures were descried on the brow of a small hill, about a mile distant: they seemed, at first, like elephants; but, after gazing a few moments at our party, fled, with the swiftness of horses, before our glasses, which had been accidentally left behind in one of the boats, could arrive to gain a more accurate view of their form. The natives called them *Poonda,* possessing, as they say, the tail and legs of a horse, and destitute of horns. This was all the information we could acquire of either of these non-descripts; and having seen only the bare outline of both, are at a loss to conjecture what class of animals they really belonged to.

After an hour's walk, some of the desired trees were pointed out and felled, though inferior in size to what had been expected, and the natives promised to float them down next day, by means of a fresh water-brook into which the tide flowed at high-water. Several fine trees were seen, but not fit for our purpose. The forest here is thick, and apparently very extensive, possessing many pretty spots, through some of which we rambled, though not to any considerable distance, from the difficulty of discovering the way back. Its inhabitants seem principally wild beasts, only one hut and one human creature being observed in going to and fro.

In returning to the boats, skeletons of various animals were strewed here and there in the forest, which had fallen a prey to the voracity of each other. Among many of the timid antelope was one of a young lion, a portion of the head, bones, and skin of which remained tolerably perfect; intermixed with these were fragments, and part of the hide of a rhinoce-

ros, still attached to the bones. Both were evidently recent, as the skins felt soft, and the bones were not yet bleached, a process speedily effected in this climate, by the weather. The contiguity of the remains left little doubt that a struggle had taken place between the animals, in which both had suffered so much, as either to have expired of their wounds, or fallen victims to fresh antagonists. These contests, we hear, are frequent, particularly between the lion and buffalo, when the woods tremble with their yells and struggles, and the fiercest animals, and even man himself, stand appalled at the sight. The natives seldom disturb their repose by hunting parties, unless some of the fiercer class annoy a village by their ravages.

We were soon roused by the snorting of many hippopotami ascending to the surface of the water to breathe. Several parties were within fifty yards of our retreat, seeming to enjoy at once the heat of the sun and the coolness of the stream. From the men left in the boats we found these creatures had been playing round them in considerable numbers, some venturing near, others content with gazing at a distance, but all much alarmed when any efforts were made to approach them. Having determined, if possible, to kill one, we were conducted to a secure ambush, at the distance of twelve or fourteen yards, and fired repeatedly from rifles, the balls frequently taking effect without apparent injury to the animals, which dived and re-ascended in a few minutes. Latterly they became shy, exposing only a small portion of the head, and, though keeping nearly in the same situation, remained longer under water. Their perceptions seemed very acute; the mere touch of the trigger at last caused instantaneous descent, so that the ball buried itself in the eddy of the spot aimed at. We therefore gave up the idea of shooting them. Their boldness is probably owing to never being disturbed in the water by the natives, and the rare use of musketry, no European having ever penetrated to this spot before. Their numbers may be accounted for from the same cause, for, previous to this, I had always conceived them few in any one spot, but as a single stream contains so many, the total number about Quiloa may amount to many thousands.

Quiloa, September 8.

At day-light, on the 3d, a party of nearly 100 men ascending the stream, landed in the same spot as formerly, but, after considerable labour, it was found, to their great mortification, that the wood would not swim. This was a most un-

expected and mortifying circumstance. Land conveyance was utterly impracticable; and the anxiety and fatigue endured both days for this single object, were therefore unavailing. It was evidently a trick of the natives, in pointing out the wrong species of wood.

In the mean time, the sultan having arrived, and some preliminary obstacles being satisfactorily arranged, paid a visit to the Nisus, when he examined every object minutely, and seemed highly gratified. On his departure he was saluted with nine guns, receiving also presents of muskets and ammunition, the usual tributes required in these negociations. Before these were given, however, the sultan had signd a contract for the supply of timber, of which, he said, we had felled the wrong species, as the woods contained a variety of others infinitely larger and finer, and of this a cargo is to be provided within six months, to be paid for in muskets, ammunition, and dollars. Should this object be fully accomplished, it will be highly useful to our naval interests, and confer credit on the spirited exertions of the officer by whom it was accomplished; for, without a provision of this kind, the naval dominion of these seas is ever precarious, as vessels losing their masts in blockading Mauritius had no nearer resource than Bombay.

Within these few days we made a small party* in an excursion on the main in a new direction. The tide being low, we landed at a short distance from the ship, on a flat of mud, which, at its junction with the shore, was so thickly bound with mangroves, that we had to walk above a mile, sinking to the calf of the leg, to gain a fair opening into the country. The wood here is more open than near the stream that had been ascended, the trees are small and apparently young, but in many spots nearly smothered by brush-wood; they have also a brown, scorched appearance, unlike the vivid green of a European forest. We could scarcely gain a single place of shelter from an intense sun; but, with every ray shooting through us, sat down unsheltered to feast upon what had been brought from the ship. The country preserves the same aspect of an uncultivated waste; man, as he exists here, seems neither to have the taste nor talent to tenant it. Yet we fancied there were faint traces of former industry and population scattered here and there, and that wars, or the detestable slave-trade,

* Lieutenant T. Stopford, R. N., Mr. Sims, Mr. Markham, myself, and an attendant.

had carried off the wretched inhabitants, whom it will now be impossible to replace. We saw only four huts and one human being, a pretty black girl, in the space of twelve or fourteen miles; but nothing by which life could be supported, not even the cocoa-nut or banana-tree, the usual bounteous offerings of nature to the wants of man in these countries. Yet the soil did not seem unfavourable, were it put in requisition by art.

Innumerable traces and many skeletons of the antelope were found in every part, and likewise one track of the leopard, which prowls for the former as its favourite prey, but neither could be distinguished. A variety of doves and smaller birds were killed. In returning we discovered a large well, situated in an extensive copse, which had been formerly inclosed by a wall, part of which was still standing. The well seemed about twenty-five feet in depth and ten in diameter, apparently hollowed out of a soft, calcareous rock, while from the bottom grew a tree, now in a great measure decayed, affording steps by which an attendant descended, and found the water dirty, ill-tasted, and small in quantity, though bearing traces of having been formerly of much more importance. Further on, towards Pagoda Point, appeared several decayed huts, tenanted by bats and reptiles, two small burying-grounds amid a cluster of small trees, and, about a mile distant, the ruins of regular stone edifices, which, appearing unexpectedly, induced Captain B—, Mons. S—, and myself, to re-visit them next day.

The first object was a small cemetery, about forty feet square, inclosed with stone, and raised two feet above the ground; the graves were convexly raised, as in Europe, with stones at the head and feet, the bodies lying east and west, but no trace that we could find of inscriptions. To the eastern end of this inclosure was attached the remains of what appeared to have been a place of worship, about twenty-three feet by twelve. The walls now remaining seemed about sixteen feet high, built of stone, cemented by mortar formed of the bastard coral, or madrepore, and in which were wedged many pieces of cocoa-nut shell, that seemed of no other use than as emblems, probably, of the value of the divine gifts, as they crumbled into dust on being touched. An arched door in front, and two in the rear, formed the entrances, and a circular white stone raised above the ground may, perhaps, have received the inclined knee of many an humble suppliant for divine mercy. Behind the ruin is a steep descent to a bed of mud, thickly lined with mangroves, which, though seemingly dry, forms an island at high-water, that, at the conclusion of the first day's excursion, occasioned us some uneasiness.

Two or three hundred yards from this spot lie the ruins of a stone building, larger than any at present possessed by the Quiloans, except the residence of the sultan. Its apartments have been numerous, some large, others smaller, and a third class, with still minuter divisions, separated by thick walls, but opening at one end into a passage common to all. The walls, at least the present remains, are broad, though not so firmly built as those of the smaller edifice, and judging, from the quantity of rubbish, their height must have been considerable. Several thick trees, of a spungy texture, issue not only from among the fallen ruins, but from the substance of the walls which seem held together merely by clay. These form various convolutions, and, by a kind of heterogeneous union, living wood seems inseparably combined and coexistent with stone. Captain B. thought he could distinguish the remains of Saxon arches; but this resemblance is probably accidental.

The perfect forms or uses of these structures it is now difficult to ascertain. The first, perhaps, was a kind of chapel; the second, either a palace or mosque; probably the latter, as a religious edifice, improperly called by strangers pagoda, formerly existed in the vicinity, and formed a mark for the harbour, but is no longer visible. This, indeed, might be considered the same, were it not three or four miles from Pagoda Point. It seems strange, however, that a temple appropriated to popular religion should be fixed in an obscure wood, without path or avenue, in some places scarcely pervious, and eight miles from the present town by water, except we conclude the forest to be of recent date, and its scite formerly well inhabited. I am convinced, indeed, that this was the case; for the youth of the trees, the half-obliterated traces of ancient footpaths, the scattered vestiges of human haunts and habitations, the cemeteries and ruins, all proclaim this district to have been once open and populous. The ruins are evidences of a former people; they were comparatively rude, perhaps, though infinitely more civilized and industrious than the present race. But whither have they gone? What have become of their descendants? There have been no formal emigrations, no pestilences, no destructive wars, no native tyrants, or foreign masters, till lately; the soil cannot have become suddenly unfruitful, yet the neighbouring country, the town, and even the whole kingdom, is wonderfully depopulated since De Gama's time. The true cause, in addition to the slave-trade, must be sought, perhaps, in the decline of commerce and industry, of which depopulation is but a necessary consequence; and the only probable reason why the former did decline, was the presence and superior power of Europeans in India.

Captain Beaver tells me the sultan boasts of his kingdom having been established for a period of nearly 1200 years, that it was once extensive and powerful, and that written testimonies remain of the crown, during that time, having descended without interruption in his family. These vouchers we have not seen, and being in Arabic, could not read, had they been produced. It is certain, however, that shortly after the death of Mahomet, the desire of making proselytes to their faith, caused hordes of Arabians to spread themselves over the East, and this inclination was increased by the success of their arms, and the ease with which the majority of the inhabitants, scarcely possessing any religion at all, imbibed their peculiar tenets. To this, perhaps, may be attributed their sudden and wonderful success. The enthusiasm of new opinions is the great stimulus to their dissemination, and these people, according to the accounts of their own historians, perseveringly adopted the wisest means for this purpose, added to the most zealous resolution. These were principally by conquests, trading voyages, religious missions and discoveries, which it is not, however, my business to detail. By the former, it may be remarked, they spread themselves over Persia, India, Egypt, Ethiopia, the Eastern islands, and parts of Europe. By the latter mode they penetrated along the eastern coast of Africa, as far as Cape Corrientes, subduing the natives, and establishing their religion in those kingdoms, which first attracted the attention and favourable report of the Portuguese. At that time, indeed, their wealth and civilization may not have been contemptable, for their governments were yet young, and the period of youth is the season of vigour; but the decline of religions enthusiasm would seem to have been contemporaneous with the political insignificance of the people. Arabia, at this time distracted and disjointed by internal dissensions, had long forgotten the very existence of these colonies, which the Portuguese likewise very soon deserted, for the more rich and important continent of India; but though thus once more rendered independent, the ancient spirit of the people had evaporated, and, left to themselves, have gradually sunk to the barbarism of the original Africans, existing in small and scattered communities rather than as formerly, in rich and flourishing nations.

In this situation, after the lapse of so many centuries, and the operation of so many changes in the East, Quiloa has again reverted to the Arab nation; the parent, therefore, has but reclaimed her lost child, and the Imaum only secured a branch of the family for stricter superintendance, which, however, will be dispensed with the first opportunity. The sultan, indeed,

has the inclination, and he says, the power also, of driving out the intruders; but, in that case, wishes for the protection of England to prevent their return, which might be done without difficulty or expence, as the name alone would insure his quiet: should the timber, however, not prove valuable, this measure will be of no advantage.

The discovery of the ruins had nearly occasioned us a night's lodging in the woods, for the evening now drawing to a close, it became necessary to seek the spot where we had disembarked in the morning, to meet the boat, but, to our great astonishment, this could not be found, though great care had been taken to mark the vicinity, and we were pretty certain it could not be far distant. Neither could the ship be distinguished, though visible an hour before, from a tall tree farther in the forest; and a considerable body of water, besides numerous groves of mangroves, seemed to have sprung up where they did not before exist. The place appeared altogether different. We traversed to and fro in vain for an outlet, the sea washing one side of what we soon found to be a peninsula, and a part of the harbour the other, which communicating at high-water, in the rear of the burying-ground and ruins, rendered the part where we had landed an island, which, being low tide, was not then perceptible; we had, therefore, either to wade through this stream, the depth and breadth of which were unknown, and thickly strewed with mangroves, or wait till the tide was out, which would not be till eleven o'clock, before a boat could be expected from the ship. The former was tried in vain, partly wading in deep mud and water, and forcing our way a few yards through the mangrove branches, till they became quite impenetrable: wet, therefore, and fatigued, as well as torn both in clothes and skin, we retraced our steps to *terra firma*, and not much enlivened in spirits by discovering the track of a panther, which we traced to a considerable distance along the shore of the opposite side of the peninsula, took possession of a nook flanked by impenetrable jungle, the water at our feet, and a large fire, which was soon kindled, in our rear. Had the grass, indeed, been long enough to burn, we should have fired the woods, and roasted all the monsters in the neighbourhood. In the mean time, the most anxious fears were entertained on-board for our safety, from the number of beasts of prey in the vicinity. Boats had been dispatched, in vain, to the landing-place, and minute-guns fired to direct our route in case of being bewildered in the forest. These we heard, and endeavoured to answer by vollies of musketry, added to a blazing fire, but neither could be distinguished on account of the distance and intervening woods, till the boats

at length, proceeding to search the whole of the shores, accidentally heard our shouts in the stillness of the night, and we got on-board in safety, pretty well tired of this party of pleasure.

Quiloa seems to offer only ivory and tortoise-shell for commerce, both of which can be sometimes procured in considerable quantities. The number of slaves formerly exported amounted to many thousands, but at present the demand is confined to the Arabs, who do not take many. The articles principally in request here are arms, ammunition, dollars, tobacco, coarse cloths, and hardware. Refreshments, I have before remarked, seemed scarce, and the natives poor; for though we did not make particular inquiries after the former, they were not offered for sale; and shipping, therefore, on a voyage will not have much inducemest to call, were it even more in their route than it is.

The people are generally good figures, being tall and well-made, and possessing regular and expressive features; the mere animal is fine, but its mind requires strict discipline and cultivation to be of use. The character seems indolent, not so amiable as that of the Johannese, and without any portion of that warlike energy and independence of feeling for which the Arabs have been famed. They domineer over the negro nations within their reach, and are in turn compelled to submit to the soldiers of Muscat; on the former they sometimes make war to procure slaves, but more generally get them in traffic with people that come from a considerable distance in the interior. The common dress is a piece of cotton cloth wrapped round the middle, and extending to the knee, and another loosely thrown over the shoulders, which is as often carried under the arm. They profess Mahometism, but do not very strictly adhere to it.

Adjoining Quiloa, to the northward, is the small independent state of *Mombaza*. It seems at all times to have enjoyed this distinguished pre-eminence, the people, though of the same origin, possessing more fierceness and spirit than the Quiloans. In 1505, the town resisted Almeida, who sacked and destroyed it. In 1528, it also resisted the entrance of Nunho da Cunha, proceeding to India as viceroy, who also took and burnt it; but of late the people have been more successful, having repulsed an attempt of the Imaum of Muscat to subjugate them.

Monfia is a fine though small island, sixty miles to the northward of Quiloa, to which kingdom it once belonged. At present it is subject to Muscat, retains an Arab governor, and pays an annual revenue of 6000 dollars to Sadi Alli, the Imaum's brother. The people make a finer sort of straw mats,

much in request in the other islands, for floors, beds, and couches.

Zanzibar, also formerly a dependancy of Quiloa, is situated eighty miles to the northward of Monfia, and is the largest and richest island, Madagascar excepted, on the eastern coast of this continent. Its length is about sixty miles, and breadth twenty; producing several species of grain, abundance of bullocks, goats, poultry, and forming the great depôt of the Imaum's colonial commerce and power; the population is considerable, and the sum of 50,000 dollars is raised annually as tribute. The governor is not only viceroy over the other islands, but chief merchant in his own, no other being permitted to dispose of their merchandize till his bargains are made, and permission purchased. The fort is said to contain many guns, but, with the present soldiers, would not resist 200 English troops for two hours, were it attacked. Mauritius, in the French time, maintained constant intercourse with this island for slaves, ivory, and gold dust; the people are partial to that nation, and lately were little less than hostile to the English.

Pemba is another fruitful island, somewhat farther to the northward, partly subject to Muscat, partly to Mombaza, and a third part independent. It is about thirty-five miles long and twelve broad, and may carry on an advantageous commerce, possessing several requisites for that purpose. The main, opposite the island of Zanzibar, is in maps and charts called erroneously by the latter name; it should bear that of Quiloa. *Melinda* and *Brava*, to the northward of Mombaza, though known to De Gama, have not been visited by the navigators of the nineteenth century; and all the information we have gained is, that they are independent, and wishing to remain so, cordially detest and exclude strangers. I commend their wisdom. These memorials of the neighbouring places are scanty, but fully as much as the majority deserve, for a sketch of one is a tolerably accurate view of the whole; the people being in general poor and barbarous, and acquainted only with the rudest means of supplying their immediate wants.

November 19.

Directing our course to the Seychelle group, sketched in a former letter, after several alarms on the great bank* by

* To the navigator it may be necessary to notice this extensive range of soundings; the real extent of which is only known to the traders of Mahé. From their reports, and our own experience, it exceeds eighty leagues in

which they are surrounded, we entered Mahé harbour, close to the Isle of Silhouete. The latter is the third in size, being about twelve or fourteen miles in circumference, its surface high and irregular, though possessing some vallies, that would be pretty but for the total deprivation of water, which, of course, precludes the residence of inhabitants.

Mahé is improving; but where is the place that does not improve by the commerce and capital of England? While we ought to remember the insolent boast of Bonaparte, that the present loss of the French colonies was of little consequence, as they would be restored by England at the conclusion of the war, in a better state than she acquired them.

This little village has increased in population and extent since our former visit; it wore a face of more bustle and gaiety, and the adjoining ground, formerly covered with brush-wood, is cleared. The weather during our stay was rainy with wind, but these annoyances were compensated by the politeness and hospitality of Captain Le Sage, who has succeeded Mr. Sullivan, whom we carried thither. The latter gentleman, though unsupported by any species of force, for there was not a soul in the islands, civil or military but himself, resolutely seized a vessel with slaves not long ago, a proof of the continued existence of the trade.

Quitting Seychelles, we anchored, on the 13th of October, at Mauritius, and, on the 20th of November, at the Cape; after pursuing an American vessel which had accompanied us nearly all the way thither, both ignorant of the war, and had separated only two days before; she, however, escaped us, but was captured by putting into Table Bay.

At Sea, February 10, 1813.

From the Cape we were ordered to St. Helena, with a convoy of merchant-men; while there, orders followed to proceed

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length, and thirty in breadth near the north-west extremity; though to the south-east not more than as many miles. The general depth varies between twelve and forty fathoms, except on the eastern edge, in the parallel of Mahé, where there are seven fathoms, and on the western limit in that of Silhouete, where there are only three and a half. Otherwise it is supposed to be pretty free from dangers, though to the northward as yet little known; some reports state rocks to have been seen in that direction. We were alarmed in coming from Quiloa, by standing a little way on the bank, to find the water decrease from sixty-five to thirty, fifteen, twelve, and nine fathoms. In the centre of the ocean, far removed from any land, this is a very alarming occurrence; and we, therefore, stood off again with all expedition, but still kept considerably within the edge of the bank; this portion of it, however, is well worth exploring.

to England, and when we all were rejoicing at the news, suddenly counter-orders arrived to return once more to the land of Hottentots.

It is impossible to approach and see this singular island, for the first time, without wondering how the deuce it got there. A vast mass of rock, rising abruptly from nearly the centre of the great Atlantic ocean, jagged and irregular, cut and slashed as it were into pieces by the great hatchet of nature—too large to be passed without examination, and too small, and unfruitful, and badly situated, to be of much use;—seems like a great sign-post of providence that would say of its divine architect, "My hand has been here." It is in truth an object that creates surprise, without much satisfaction, its whole exterior being forbidding, and were it not so well known, nobody would suspect it contained inhabitants; for rough and barren sides, perpendicular precipices of many hundred feet, shores literally iron-bound, added to rocky and grassless hills, seem as if in its formation man had been intentionally excluded.

But the charm of novelty erased this impression; we compared it to a good-natured man with a repelling countenance, whose heart, though kind, was veiled under a rough exterior. The approach to the anchorage leads round Sugar-loaf Point; here ships send their boats on-shore to declare their names, destination, and country, without which they are fired at and not suffered to anchor. Batteries now appear in every direction; guns, gates, embrasures, and soldiers continually meet the eye; so that instead of being, as we might suppose, the abode of peace and seclusion, it looks like a depôt for the instruments of war. It was the last day of the year when we anchored. Unlike the heavy opaque atmosphere of your English Decembers, the sky was serene and cloudless; and a tropical sun, moderated by the trade, or south-east wind, made the prospect better than nature perhaps intended it.

James's Town, the only one in the island, and called after James II. in the hey-day of his popularity, does not become visible till arrived near the anchorage, which lies directly opposite. It is situated in the second valley seen in the approach, (the first being Rupert's) a deep narrow ravine, flanked by steep, stony ridges, towering above it to a considerable height. That to the right (or left when viewed from the water,) is termed Rupert's-hill, so called from the famous prince of that name having a carriage-road, named Side-path, cut along its brow. To the left is Ladder-hill, up whose steep side is traced a zig-zag road, overhanging dreadful precipices, and leading to Plantation-house, the country residence of the governor. The first view of the town is not unpleasing.

A line of works, ornamented with tall trees, skirt the beach. Toward the right extremity of this is the landing-place, so that an enemy, should he even effect a descent, has a considerable distance to go, commanded both from above and below, before he can reach the gate. Through the latter, which is closed every night, we entered the town. It is formed by one principal street, of some length, extending directly up the valley, with here and there intersections, tolerably broad, paved, clean, and resembling an English village, though more neat and compact. The houses are small and white-washed; they consist principally of shops and lodging-houses, the former retailing the wares of India and Europe at an advanced price, the latter giving a temporary home to the passengers in the India fleets. It also contains a church, a residence for the governor, a theatre built in 1809, a tavern, barracks, and (what would be better in any other situation,) a burying-ground. Several batteries and posts surround it on all sides. The head of the valley gives origin to a fine stream of water, which, beside supplying the inhabitants, is conducted to the beach for the use of the shipping.

St. Helena was discovered by Don Juan de Caleca, or de Nova, a Portuguese navigator, on St. Helen's day, 1502. Subsequently it was often visited by that people, who, finding it convenient in their homeward India voyages, imported hogs, goats, poultry, fruit-trees, partridges, and pheasants, though the two latter are said by others to be indigenous. It does not, however, appear they ever established a colony, having more important objects to attend to in India; a chapel, however, was built out of the wreck of a ship, in the valley now called James's, the remains of which were found many years afterward. The English first took possession in the year 1600. The Dutch, however, appear to have been settled there before, and regained it by conquest, about 1672, but were soon dispossessed by the intrepidity of a naval commander, named Munden, and the island being given up by Charles II. to the East-India Company, has ever since remained under their authority. In shape it is nearly circular, about twenty-eight miles in circumference, its surface neither even nor generally susceptible of cultivation, and possessing two high peaks or hills. The India fleets have for many years invariably touched here returning from India, to procure refreshments; but these are so very inconsiderable, considering the expences of the establishment, as to be scarcely worth mentioning. Treading the fields and streets indeed, seeing a new people, wandering over rocks, and imbibing the odour of the fresh earth, all are refreshments to the human

frame, jaded by confinement on ship-board during the passage from India: but these are nearly all; for good living is out of the question. The man who should peradventure desire the luxury of a fresh meal, must first reflect on the extravagance he is going to commit; he ought to be made up of pagodas, or have his trunks groaning under the weight of rupees; otherwise he should not land here. He dare not taste a mutton-chop, if indeed such a thing can be had, under a guinea, or refresh his longing and thirsty palate with a bottle of good English porter, under a sum nearly as great. Killing a sheep is an event of almost as much consequence in the island, as Bonaparte annihilating an Austrian or Prussian army in Europe; and the slaughter of a bullock nearly equal to the subjection of a kingdom. Very few of either are to be had. Goats, hogs, and poultry, are more plentiful, but mostly kept by the inhabitants for their own use, seldom or never coming within reach of a poor sailor's pocket, and not always of his officer's. In fact, it is a miserable place; the necessaries of life are scarcely to be procured, and then only at an exorbitant rate. The refreshments, therefore, afforded to seamen, for which purpose the island is said to be retained, consist of a few potatoes, cabbages, garden-roots, and the wild water-cresses picked up in the ravines.

The main defects arise as well from nature as the impolitic system and prejudices of the people. According to Colonel Beatson, the present governor, who has published some pamphlets, and otherwise taken much trouble to point out their true interests, the great error is the neglect of agriculture. There are no farmers in the island by profession. The majority of the people, being shopkeepers, live in town; and the land being subdivided between them into small tracts, they occasionally resort thither for amusement, having neither time nor inclination to attend to the soil. But in order to be of some use, these districts have been stocked with goats, which feed and take care of themselves, without trouble to the owners: hence the origin in St. Helena phraseology, of "a goat range," which is advertised for sale, with as much ceremony as a large estate in England. These creatures wandering at pleasure, destroy not only crops, but young fences, shrubs, plantations of trees, and vegetation of every description, an evil that is little decreased by the infliction of slight penalties. They give no trouble in herding or feeding, and, answering a local convenience, are continued; yet the number of cattle on the whole, notwithstanding the prevalence of the grazing system, is not greater now than it was forty years ago, though the population has more than doubled.

It is not long since there was not a plough in the island, and now, owing to his exertions, there are eighteen. Hitherto about 120 acres only have been subjected to their operation, notwithstanding the most accurate statements, assert that above 1200, or even 1600, are fit for tillage. Longwood Farm, which is the best and most improved, belongs, I believe, to the government. From the scarcity of a working population, the free people of colour being few, and the slaves otherwise employed, arose the introduction of about 200 Chinese, who set examples of industry that might be very advantageously imitated.

Considerable part of the food of the inhabitants consists of salted meats and flour, the principal part of which, particularly for the lower classes, comes from England, and is sold by the company, I believe, at prime-cost, or at least a very trifling advance. This entails a serious expence. In 1732, the annual charge was not more than £4000; at present it exceeds £120,000; for the people, being thus cheaply supplied, do not find it necessary to change their system. Added to this is the want of fuel, so that coals from England form a necessary article of consumption.

Having seen all the "live lions" of the town, I set off, accompanied by a friend, to view those of the country. On the sea face of Ladder-hill stands a strong battery, commanding the approach to the anchorage, situated on the verge of an abrupt and fearful cliff, frowning defiance on the ships in the bay.

At the gate of this post commences the level road into the interior, taking a serpentine direction, and passing near *High Knoll*, a hill possessing a castle and other works. This is the worst part of the island, the ground being formed of coarse sand and stones, covered in some places by a sheet of solid matter, like lava, bearing proofs of former fusion, and seeming impenetrable either to the plough or the spade. But immediately after having quitted this barren tract, a charming valley appeared to the left, decked with gardens and pretty white cottages, the outlines skirted by eminences, a small stream murmuring near the centre, and a few sheep browzing. The contrast was striking, and only required the aid of a pretty shepherdess, with her crook, to be complete. A little further on, in a vale to the right, is Plantation-house, the country residence of the governor, surrounded by gardens and planting, which obscure it from the road. Near the avenue is a rural church and flag-staff. The house is sufficiently elegant and capacious, and the grounds bear witness to the industry of the present intelligent proprietor, whose taste leads particularly to

agricultural improvements, the returns from a few of which, of late introduction, bear testimony to their value. These labours are of use to the community, by shewing how much may be done for its further comfort, in this confined and unprofitable spot, by a little perseverance and skill properly applied.

As we advanced, the prospect assumed more variety, and our pleasure was increased by the society of an intelligent inhabitant, who described the different habitations with the names of the owners. For about five miles there is a series of pretty romantic views of a country, evidently not rich, yet neither altogether unprofitable nor neglected. The scene, however, is quite new; we constantly perceive there is little resemblance to Europe; all the objects are essentially different, and this impression is occasionally confirmed by a distant view of the immeasurable Atlantic Ocean. The roads are good, though small, sometimes running on the summit of a small ridge, then twining along its brow, now in a valley, anon intersected by a gate or a small stream, occasionally on level ground, or, when nigh the sea, close to the edge of a precipice. Cottages sometimes appeared perched immediately over our heads, or prostrate at our feet; a few were half concealed in natural cavities, or obscured by bushes, through which their white fronts were scarcely discernible.

In about two hours we reached the opposite side of the island, and, desirous of overlooking the beach more narrowly, quitted the road. The ponies, slow though sure-footed, easily surmounted the difficulties of the ground. We rode leisurely along the paths lining the vast and rugged precipices that skirt the sea; many of these are several hundred feet perpendicular in height. The eye, pained by looking down, recoils from their awful depth and repulsive aspect, while the hollow roar of the surge against their bases, and the shrill cries of the sea-birds striking the ear, seem to suit the churlish sternness and inhospitality of the shores. Here and there appeared a sandy cove, sometimes possessing a hut, probably a fisherman's, that seemed scarcely screened from the fury of the winds and waves by the adjoining natural fortifications of disjointed rocks. It is not true, therefore, as is commonly said, that there are only one or two landing-places; the number exceeds half a dozen, though some are obstructed by surf, and the whole are easily practicable to men who do not care for wet feet; though certainly not suited to the accommodation of a lady stepping out of a boat in a ball-room dress. We had a distant view, at one period, of the tips of some tall rocks, called after Lot and his family; these are usually the resort of large flocks of aquatic birds, and are often distinguished some distance at sea.

The climate of St. Helena is generally fine, and the island healthy, the temperature also pretty equable, seldom exceeding 80° of Fahrenheit in the town; and in the country, six or eight degrees lower. In the colder season, the average is about 60°. It is not, however, remarked to be particularly favourable to invalids; at least some from India, who have touched here, and with whom I have occasionally conversed, did not mention it with praise; others, however, have received benefit. The air of the hills is sometimes keen, the S. E. trade-wind commonly prevailing here with a freshness that is invigorating; gales, however, are unusual. Frequent showers assist vegetation, and heavy rains are not uncommon; so that the proportion of moisture is greater than could be expected in this latitude. Yet the island has been sometimes subject to droughts that have destroyed nearly the whole of the cattle, and caused some distress to the people; but these seasons are rare, and the losses experienced have been attributed to want of reservoirs. Fogs occasionally envelope the hills, though rarely of long continuance, so that the sea-view is little interrupted; vessels are, therefore, distinguished at a considerable distance, and this alone is a protection against enemies. The principal watch is kept on Diana's Peak, the highest hill, elevated about 2200 feet above the level of the sea. Game is principally confined to pheasants, and a white species of partridge, to which may be added doves and several smaller birds, besides rabbits; rats were formerly so numerous as to destroy the grain, but of late they have decreased.

The population at present* consists of 3500 persons, of whom 700 are white, 950 soldiers, 1400 slaves, and the remainder, free people of colour. The garrison, however, according to the establishment, ought to be 1400 men; it consists of the St. Helena regiment and a corps of artillery, all Europeans, paid by the India Company; but the whole male population hold themselves in readiness to bear arms on emergency. Part of the former corps accompanied Sir Home Popham to Buenos Ayres, and though the first time ever brought into active service, distinguished itself. The troops receive fresh provisions twice a week, with a proportion of native beer or Cape wine; spirits are interdicted; but the stoppage of this favourite ration and the substitution of wine, twelve months ago, occasioned a mutiny, which, though soon suppressed, cost several of the misguided men their lives. The desertion of six of the artillery in an open boat, some years ago, encouraged by the

* January, 1813.

master of an American vessel, their sufferings during a voyage to the coast of South America, the deliberate destruction of one companion by lot, (which justly fell on the ringleader,) for food to the others, with the other horrors attending their deplorable situation, is a well-known occurrence.

We quitted the anchorage for a short cruize off the island, with the expectation, as I have already hinted, of speedily returning to prepare for our departure to England. During this time a fleet of Indiamen passed in; but, on the appearance of his majesty's ship Astrea, with counter-orders, our steps again took the direction of the Cape. We are now beating up in as direct a route as possible from St. Helena to the Cape, against both wind and current, a circumstance hitherto considered by the most intelligent navigators nearly impracticable; the usual way is to proceed to the southward, and search for a fair wind, which is doubtless the most expeditious; but we have the higher motive of intercepting the enemy's vessels from India and China, and have so far succeeded as to capture one of value. The facility with which we proceed, renders it strange why it should be universally stated, that ships which once pass St. Helena cannot regain it. I suspect the experiment has not been made; or, at least, not made in earnest; for nothing can be clearer than that, if we can beat up to the Cape from that island, lying directly to leeward of it, so we could equally reach St. Helena from a still further leeward position; the winds and currents being no stronger on the leeward than on the windward side of the island, the supposition is, therefore, entirely gratuitous.

Simon's Bay, September.

At length, after six months of eager expectation, orders have arrived for the Nisus to return to England, to the inexpressible satisfaction of us all; for to tell you a truth, not perhaps generally known, seamen, aye and officers too, after a few years absence in ships-of-war, often experience a species of nostalgia, an almost diseased desire of revisiting their country, which overpowers most other feelings. Nay, I have seen it produce actual disease, amounting nearly to female weakness, in men, whose nerves might have been supposed a kin to iron. I could fill a long letter with illustrations of this fact; but, at present, shall say no more, than that, on the present occasion, as soon as the intelligence was communicated, a burst of joy involuntarily broke from every bosom on-board.

We shifted round to this anchorage, as is usual, the latter end of April; Table Bay, heretofore, formed the summer-quarters

of ships-of-war; this Bay the winter; but, in compliance with recent orders from England, the whole naval establishment is forthwith to be permanently fixed here; which, by the consequent influx of inhabitants, will not only enliven the village but in time render it of consequence. The expence of this removal is estimated at 80,000*l.*; others say it will amount to more than double that sum, in consequence of the houses necessary to be built or purchased for the officers and the hospital; but the anchorage is in every respect superior to the other.

Table Bay, in fact, though extensive, can scarcely be said to be sheltered from any winds; and when blowing from the north-west a fearful sea rolls in, frequently causing shipwreck, almost at the doors of the inhabitants; I have myself witnessed three or four of these distressing occurrences; traders, however, touch there at all seasons, in consequence of the vicinity of Cape Town.

Simon's Bay is confined, but with common precaution secure from both the north-west and south-east, or winter and summer winds; during the former, it will give abundant shelter to fifty sail of vessels, and in the latter to about half the number, besides small craft; gusts from the north-east tumbling over the hills of Hottentot Holland, cause a swell which sometimes renders landing difficult at the pier, but shipping receive no injury. Nature, indeed, precludes the construction of docks; other improvements, however, will doubtless be attempted, among which a stone pier, carried out on a natural ledge of rocks, lying about 150 yards south-east of the present mouldering jetty, would give ample protection to boats and small vessels in the most stormy weather; though even as it now is, Simon's Bay answers every substantial purpose of a haven for men-of-war, Indiamen, and other shipping, which have not cargoes to unload.

Fish abound here as in Table Bay, the most delicate of which is the *roman*, so called from being mostly caught near the rocks of that name, a species of bream, remarkable for never being found to the westward of Cape Point. Skate are caught in numbers with the seine at the landing-place, but the seamen, from some foolish aversion, decline eating them; the officers and inhabitants, however, have more wisdom or less prejudice. Fishing parties take place daily to all parts of the bay, as we are now better acquainted with the haunts of the finny tribe than formerly, when the fishermen played off a trick; for having on our first arrival requested to be shewn the best ground for using nets, they, probably dreading encroachments on their trade, gave such directions, that not only

no fish were caught, but our tackling in a great measure destroyed by the rocks.

Oysters, of which we have occasionally procured some hundreds, by dint of considerable labour, are found in Buffalo Bay, an inlet situated nearer the mouth of False Bay; all the rocks abound with the smaller shell-fish; crabs and lobsters, however, I have not yet met with.

Seals and penguins frequent the bay in great numbers; the former particularly around the roman and (named from this circumstance) seal-island rocks, frequently following boats with a variety of gambols, as if prompted by curiosity to examine the people, and for this purpose seeming to raise themselves erect in the water. The penguins, from some unexplained cause, appear tame, several having been picked up without resistance, by our boats passing to the shore; and a boy descending the side of the ship allured two to his hand, by holding out food; when released, after a few days confinement, one soon returned.

Vast flights of aquatic birds, flying low and screaminginceessantly, often direct their course from the mouth apparently to the head of False Bay, seeming from Simon's Town, to darken the whole surface of the water as far as the opposite shore of Hottentot Holland; on these occasions they commonly preserve the wedge-form remarked by naturalists. In fewer numbers they have a favourite rendezvous on a large rock near the anchorage, known by the name of Noah's Ark.

Boks, that is, different species of the antelope, form the most valuable sort of game in this neighbourhood; there are four species, *raebok*, *griesbok*, *duiken*, and *klip-springer*, though within the colony not less than sixteen or seventeen are enumerated, varying in size from a young kid to the height of a bullock; out of these a friend of mine has himself killed eleven species; the largest is the *cadou*, possessed of horns, which when polished, are from their size much sought after by the curious.

In addition to these are the hare, and *das*, or rock-rabbit; two of which were served up at table a few days ago, killed by one of the officers, but they are little esteemed. The feathered tribe consist of two or three species of wild duck, snipe, curlew, partridge, rock-partridge, pow, or wild turkey, and pheasant; to which may be added, those noble birds the pelican and flamingo, the latter of which, from the eagerness of collectors, is becoming very shy, though a fine one was recently shot at the head of Table Bay, by another sporting friend.

Wolves, jackals, the tiger-cat, a small leopard, or perhaps more correctly speaking, the onze of Buffon, range the penin-

sula, committing occasional depredations; none venture to attack man except under peculiar circumstances, as severe hunger, self-defence, or finding him asleep, in which latter way two artillerymen, dispatched to a post near Hont's Bay, who had been missing for three years, and whose remains were not long ago found, are supposed to have perished.

Jackals are frequently hunted near Wyneberg, Musenburgh, and along the sandy flats at the head of False Bay, by a pack kept at the former place, by the officers of the 21st dragoons, who seem as zealous in the sports of the field as of the turf; and, indeed, form a main prop to the amusements of Cape Town. Strangers are freely admitted to the hunt; in which some severe falls are occasionally experienced from the multitude of mole burrows; so numerous, indeed, are these animals, that in lack of other modes of industry, it might be profitable to dig them out for the sake of the fur.

Wolves are numerous in all parts of the colony, and were their ferocity equal to the European, would be a source of continual apprehension; during the day they keep secluded among the rocky eminences, sallying out in the night to plunder farm-yards, or prey on dead carcases of horses, oxen, dogs, and the offal of slaughter-houses. In riding to Slang Kope twelve months ago, I twice disturbed several animals apparently of this class, feasting on a dead ox, but they had retreated among the bushes before I got near. A horse is a favourite dish, and sometimes they take the liberty of catering for themselves, without waiting for the course of nature; now and then the saddle being on prevents their attacks, as if conscious that where this appendage is, man is not far distant; and oxen in the team, or even made fast to a waggon, are in general pretty secure, as instances are known where these have been followed many miles, and not once molested till turned loose to graze.

Some months ago we visited the farms of Constantia, so celebrated for their wine, situated about ten miles from town, at the back of the Table; strangers rarely neglect this ceremony; and however annoying to the owners, it is a tax universally levied on celebrity by the idle and the inquisitive. Curiosity, however, is not always indulged here, for one of the proprietors bears so little reputation for politeness, that, instead of the usual term Mr., another epithet, applicable only to the quadruped race, is always, by both natives and English, prefixed to his name.

The soil of both vine-yards is a rich red clay, which is supposed to impart the peculiar qualities of the wine, though some of the neighbouring farms seem to possess a similar earth, without being able to produce the same flavoured grape; some

conceive there is a mystery in the mode of preparation, and it is certain a large quantity of sulphur is used. The vintage is always later than with other wines, the grape being left on the vine till the latter end of March, when it is considered "dead ripe," and being then removed, is well cleansed from any particles of earth, the bad carefully picked out, the stalks rejected, and the prime fruit only submitted to the press.

The quantity of wine, of course, varies with the seasons; Greater Constantia has sometimes produced fifty pipes, and at other times thirty, twenty, or even so little as fifteen; the average probably is above thirty. Government, I understand, according to immemorial custom, has an admitted priority of claim to a certain quantity; to others it is sold at from ninety to 140 dollars the half-aum, as the stock on hand may be; and purchasers are recommended (by common report) to remove it under their own eye, as soon as the bargain is made, in order to be secure from adulterations.

The usual mode of conveyance to Cape Town from this place is on horseback, but the hacks are wretchedly bad; a friend's horse, however, (thank my stars!) has prevented the having recourse to them. The charge to Cape Town, one day up, one there, and the third down, is fifteen rix-dollars, besides the keep of the animal; the hire of a waggon for merely going up is thirty-six dollars, but these are commonly taken by parties.

A good stock of clothing should be provided by every person coming hither, not merely on the score of economy, but of quality; boots cost twenty-four dollars, shoes nine, a coat sixty, hat sixteen, shirt, stockings, and other things in the same proportion; besides being, like most exportation articles, of only second-rate materials and fabric. Of national or colonial coin I have already remarked there is none, an undoubted proof of poverty; Spanish dollars and English penny-pieces are the only thing in this shape, all the proper currency from sixpence to fifty dollars being paper.

It was my intention before concluding, to attempt to sketch an outline of the importance of this colony to Great Britain in a general point of view, but having lately met with the luminous work of Mr. Barrow on the subject, the thought was instantly dropped; indeed, on perusing it, I immediately drew my pen through much of what I had already written, for who would say again what has been already said so well?

Yet even since he wrote, short as the time is, obvious improvements in every way have taken place, and are daily going on, for English capital and English governments always work wonders where their operations are unrestrained. A spirit of

inquiry is spreading among the people; the value of land has materially risen; commerce is struggling to gain a secure footing, which it has not hitherto had; the wines are infinitely better, the breed of cattle, horses, and sheep, particularly the two latter, have been greatly improved; in fact, ameliorations in almost every way may be traced by the most superficial observer; and which, should the colony be eventually secured to England by a treaty of peace, are certain of increase, as many of our countrymen would then embark capital in agriture, which at present they decline, in dread of its being made over to France.

Rio de Janeiro, October 1813.

Directing our course toward the coast of Brazil, in order to give protection to a fleet of merchant-ships, we bade a final farewell to the Cape on the 19th of September. The morning was one of the finest of a fine season, the aspect of the heavens mild and serene, as if nature smiled on the first efforts to revisit our native soil. There is, on these occasions, a fire and animation of feeling in the human breast, beyond mere joy, a light, ethereal exhileration of soul, in fact, soaring above its grosser tenement, and for a moment forgetting its earthly existence.

On the 16th of October, we discovered the Sugar-loaf Rock, at the entrance of Rio harbour, a species of natural finger-post, placed there for wise purposes, to point out to the voyager the security he may find within. It rises abruptly from the sea, is nearly perpendicular, and yet inclines a little obliquely, as if tottering under the vast weight of matter. The whole stupendous mass of solid granite, nearly 700 feet high, separated from the common base of the adjoining range of hills, by the breadth of the harbour's mouth, which being narrow, and of no great depth, and with a continual swell on what may be termed the bar, seems as if it had been formed and deepened by the continual gush of waters into the sea. The rock, which is situated on the left, and crowned by a small portion of verdure, was once successfully ascended by a bold adventurer, who, attempting the same feat a second time, fell, and was killed.

To the right appears another body of the same rock, moderately high, and shelving to the water's edge; its summit, crowned by the fort of Santa Cruz, having two tiers of guns, though, at present, in an indifferent state of repair. Within the entrance is a small island tolerably fortified. Further up is another, called, by the English, *Mud Fort Island,* from firing, as it is said, dried *mud-shot*, by way of economy, at vessels

attempting to pass to the anchorage, without waiting for due examination and pratique. Notwithstanding the cheap nature of the shot, the masters pay handsomely for a second discharge, and if a third becomes necessary, they are sometimes committed to prison. This island contains magazines for the use of the national navy, and is not allowed to be visited by strangers.

It is not till after passing these, that the whole beauty of the scenery bursts upon the eye. A great expanse of waters, extending many miles distant, arms shooting here and there like rivers, clusters of verdant islands, mountains possessing every shape, and vallies containing every charm to satisfy the strongest imagination, form a boundless assemblage of picturesque beauties. Quiloa alone, of all the places I have seen, would, perhaps, bear some resemblance, were it surrounded by such unequalled diversity of hill and of dale, of abrupt and of shelving grounds. Yet nature and the Portuguese are at variance, for the former is all rich and magnificent, the latter poor and mean. Intermixed with fine and gay, and grand objects, we find dirty buildings, dismantled forts, decayed habitations, and bare walls. Grander outlines could not possibly be filled up by meaner finishing; and yet such is the redeeming power of natural scenery, of endless streams forming petty inlets, embosing themselves in woods, or meandering round shady points, so many romantic views, such a refreshing intermixture of wood and water, divided by a white pebbly shore, rising directly into garden and green sod, that we forget the neglect and bad taste of the works of art.

The town is looked for in vain, till winding round a rugged projection it appears on the left, like other efforts of the people, without variety or grandeur. It is built in a low valley, with high grounds on the flanks and in the rear, so that the boundaries cannot be well extended; some houses being situated on hillocks, rise higher than others; the general level, however, seems only a few feet above the water, and the rear being equally low in situation as the front, little idea can be formed of its extent by a view from the harbour. In every point of view the situation is unfavourable for the scite of a large city. The people can neither see nor be seen: the houses are hemmed in by hills; the rains tumbling headlong down, render the streets dirty; the air having little circulation, impure vapours continually ascend and concentrate over it, in the form of a brownish cloud. Added to all these, the ground was formerly a marsh, and the inhabitants not unfrequently suffer from intermittent and remittent fevers. A vast mass of ordinary buildings, closely compacted, dirty, discoloured, and

neglected, repel the eye to the turrets and glittering spires of nearly twenty churches. These again point to the palace, to the monasteries, and other places of inferior note. The different objects, it may be justly imagined, have not sufficient space, they appear huddled together, as if it had been the aim of successive architects, to compress the greatest proportion of heterogenous matter within the smallest compass.

I landed for the first time on Sunday, at a flight of steps usually reserved for the boats of men-of-war, directly opposite the royal residence. The palace altogether forms three sides of a square, with an open front toward the harbour. The right wing only is occupied by the royal family, the remainder being divided between the court retainers, the Mint, the stables, palace-guard, and some public offices. In the centre of the square the military, who seem to be numerous, go through their evolutions, and on Saints' days it is not a little singular to see them, though thus busily occupied, dexterously pulling off their caps, and carrying arms at the same instant, when the clock strikes twelve. The palace may be not unaptly designated by the term shabby-genteel: it bears evident traces of neglect, is in some places mean, and in others dilapidated. But this is a portion of the national taste; for it often seems, in their public structures, as if elegance were impiety, and neatness a sin. Let me also add, however, that the royal tenant, who is as homely in his ideas as appearance, has neither pride nor pomp in any way; he is often without guards, equipages, or attendants of state. His court, like his house, is plain; ceremony, the current coin of such places, is dispensed with as often as possible by himself, though not by his attendants; and he is seldom so well pleased as when released from the fatiguing forms of his high office.

A minute carries us from the palace into Rua da Rieta, the main commercial street of the city. Here we see all the dirt, hurry, bustle, and confusion of business. The next thing that strikes an English eye, is the general neglect apparent in the houses. Fronts once white, or of brick-colour, we see changed to a foul brown; streaks of black, formed by purling streams from the roofs, present every species of mathematical figure that can be formed by casual dirt on the walls; in several places broken casements, dismembered lattices, holes in the roofs and sides; and, where there are glass windows, broken panes tastefully set off with brown paper. Time and accident seem to commit their ravages without interruption. A city deserted, or reeking from the effects of an assault, could not exhibit much greater pictures of devastation. Neither is there sufficient taste in the architecture to redeem this general negligence; and, were we

to judge from occasional specimens, it might be conjectured that some of the dirt had been imported along with many of the people from Lisbon.

The churches are by far the most considerable of the public buildings. Were we thence to judge of the quantum of religion and morality, Rio would rank high in the Christian world, but unhappily this does not always follow. They are commonly oblong and without aisles, and, the entrance being at one end, a gay curtain screens the view from the street during the performance of divine service, while at the other extremity is usually an altar-piece representing some of the sufferings of our Saviour. The walls are lined with paintings of the apostles and other scripture personages, besides saints known only by their place in the Roman calendar. The prince's chapel is small though neat; it is also provided with good singers as well as a fine organ; we entered it on the anniversary of the christening of the regent's eldest son, a fine lad about fifteen years old, who, with his father and sisters, attended divine service. The royal family have a private avenue to and from the palace. The grandest church seen from the harbour, possessing two lofty turrets, has nothing within to recommend it to curiosity.

We strolled toward the public garden, when, as well as at subsequent periods, it was quite deserted, except by a solitary old man, who looks after the grounds. It is situated to the right of the town, by the water-side, and has straight walks, which were actually muddy, a variety of trees and shrubs, flagged terrace, jet d'eau, a little cascade, and the figure of a crocodile very well executed in bronze. The terrace is a pleasant walk, overhanging a beach of bebbles, among which the miniature waves of the harbour gently murmur, humble mimics of the ever-restless ocean without. The prospect hence is fine, and the air at least pure, a pleasure that the town cannot always boast; at one extremity of the terrace is a small summer-house, on the walls of which are hung a few prints. The walk from this to the aqueduct is not long. It is a noble and truly useful work; the pipe is between five and six miles in length, and carried through the vallies on arches, which, meeting the eye on entering or quitting the harbour, present a picturesque and not inelegant appearance.

The garrison, which is well clothed and disciplined, seems considerable; within the city and vicinity, it is said, 8000 effective men could be brought into the field. The population is commonly estimated at about 90,000, of which about one-sixth part term themselves white. Many, however, would find some difficulty in proving their right to this honour, for the

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prevailing complexions being brown and yellow, a rosy European would admit the claims of very few.

The exports consist of hides and tallow, principally from Buenos Ayres, ivory from the coast of Africa, cotton, coffee, sugar, fustic, logwood, cochineal, gold and precious stones. The latter come from the mines, between two and 300 miles distant; the former arrive in coasters from different settlements north and south of the capital. The monthly return of specie to London, varies between £12,000 and £16,000, the gain upon which, in the present state of the money-market there, is considerable; remittances of this kind are usually conveyed by men-of-war; but even at the present period, notwithstanding the dangers from American cruizers, the demands of correspondents are sometimes so urgent, that specie is often intrusted to packets and other insecure vessels. The present opportunity being favourable, we take home a considerable freight. The beautiful Brazil wood used for furniture, is, as well as some other things, a royal monopoly, besides gunpowder and a few more articles of the imports.

Many English merchants reside here, characterized by their usual liberal hospitality, some of whom are old residents, and others followed the court from Lisbon, or have since arrived from England. Previous to that time some large fortunes were made; latterly they have been few, the sphere for enterprize being almost over-crowded by candidates, several of whom have found a richer and more unoccupied mart for their activity in Maldonado, Monte Video, and Buenos Ayres. The custom-house, situated in Rua da Rieta, though not imposing in appearance, wears a face of much bustle and business. Near the city is a small establishment for a whale-fishery, the coasts frequently abounding with that valuable animal; but, either from deficient means, or skill, seldom very successful. The slave-market is in Val Longo; here they are ranged in groups, the living victims of Mammon,—speaking mementos of the villainies of which human-nature is capable; for robberies and treasons scarcely possess the criminality of this traffic. The average value of a prime slave is about £30; formerly the number annually imported was between 10 and 15,000; at present it is, happily, materially decreased.

The court makes so little show, that a stranger is not once reminded of its existence, though the effect is undoubtedly favourable to commerce and industry, besides conciliating the population of the country. The measure of emigration seemed to us all, at the time, no less strange than uncommon; it has been alternately abused by almost all the politicians of Europe, but whether originating in timidity or weakness, has proved

of the soundest political wisdom. Independent of the advantages of the government of Portugal having its chief organ free from the thraldom of Bonaparte, the contrary of which has been so fatal to Spain, this important colony, in itself a great kingdom, has been preserved to the mother-country. The desire for independence was general among the people, the power of the local government small. North America afforded a successful example, which had been long admired, and would have been imitated had they possessed equal vigour of character with that turbulent people. An occasion being also wanting to give a plausible pretext for deserting the parent state, the invasion of the French offered it; and there is no question among those who best know the country, that, but for the timely arrival of the government, Brazil would have followed, if not preceded, the efforts of the Spanish colonies for independence.

A gazette, published twice a week, details the momentous events passing in Europe; and descants freely on the commercial policy and edicts of England. Jealousies of course exist on many points; African slavery is one of the principal; for the trading part of the people, perhaps I may add every class, affected by it in some way or another, cling to this object as if it were their last stake. All other considerations give way to it. Portugal and Spain, England and France, Wellington, Bonaparte, and the Prince, may all go headlong to the shades, provided their darling traffic—the subject of their waking and sleeping dreams, be but permitted to remain. This attachment no power of argument will conquer, except it be the argument of force—at all times a harsh and perhaps not very justifiable measure, considering the jealousy entertained of our influence in the national councils, which statesmen as well as merchants, ecclesiastics, and soldiers, all wish to see diminished. Our popularity in fact hangs but by a slender thread; for so injurious has the peculiar commercial connection with England been considered by some of her writers, that, had the government been of a more popular nature, it would, no doubt, long ere this, have been dissolved.

St. Salvador, November, 1813.

We entered the bay, after a passage of five weeks from Rio, having surmounted the opposition of the monsoon. Immediately to the northward of Bahia the coast is low, barren, and dangerous. The entrance of the bay here is narrowed by sand-banks, and partly commanded by a fort, which would offer no material obstruction to a determined enemy. Keeping pretty close to the shore on the right, the land rises into a ridge; on the left, at some distance, is a low island; and ad-

vancing in this way about three miles, the city, composed principally of white buildings, presents a commanding position elevated above us, as the ship casts anchor, half a mile from the beach.

St. Salvador, situated on the northern shore of this great bay, was once the capital of Brazil, but for several years has been degraded to the second rank, giving place to Rio de Janeiro. It is about two miles in length, extending not only along the summit of the ridge already noticed, but on the beach beneath: the height of the former above the latter is between two and three hundred feet, in some places nearly perpendicular, in others more oblique, so that houses are constructed on the brow, which thus unite what may be correctly termed the upper and lower towns. Between them are several zig-zag or winding paths and streets, scarcely one of which is practicable to a wheeled carriage. Palanquins, therefore, are principally used by those who do not ascend and descend on foot: besides, these avenues are generally narrow and dirty, the habitations mean, the people seemingly poor and squallid objects, peeping their heads through broken panes and disjointed lattices, females of easy access, throwing out their lures to the unwary, and sometimes half-clad children supplicating charity. The summit of the bank alone is the region of fashion; equipages, fine houses, gay people, handsome churches, and some good streets. The beach, or lower town, is the depository of commerce and filth; these the Portuguese seem to make inseparable companions. In the former appear the gay and the well-dressed, enjoying air and salubrity; in the latter, men of business intermixed with naked negroes, dragging along bales and hogsheads, both of whom, by their indifference, seem deprived of the sense of smelling. In the former are churches, balls, and operas; in the latter counting-houses, stores, and shops. Sailors and gentlemen, soldiers, police-officers, and a species of lazaroni, still further diversify the moving medley, while over the doors the eye is often saluted with "*Ships supplied on the shortest notice, by Messrs. A. B. and Co.*"

The lower town has all these objects concentrated in one principal street, extending its whole length. Here and there are a few intersections of lanes and alleys, where the breadth between the water and the foot of the bank will admit. The houses are irregularly built, dirty, and inconvenient; some looking more like decayed tenements for the dead, than habitations for the living. Fortunately, many of their tenants are commonly occupied in the preparation of snuff, the penetrating aroma of which issuing at all crevices into the street,

either causes a stranger to sneeze the moment he enters it from the landing-place in the naval arsenal, or fortifies his olfactories against the potency of more unsavoury odours. Cloacina seems almost publicly worshipped; and so truly devout are her admirers, that the offerings are never removed, except by the united influence of sun, rains, and winds.

Escaping as quickly as possible from so many impure and disagreeable objects, we ascended to the Upper Town. Here the chest freely expanded, and we could be said to breathe once more without fear. The houses, public buildings, and streets, assume a superior character; but even these have many faults, for however convenient or grand, they must not be expected to be undefiled by neglect or bad taste. The palace, opera-house, archbishop's palace, cathedral, library, besides churches, chapels, monasteries, and convents, without number, form the principal edifices. The archbishop's residence is more neat than any of the others, and seems to possess the rare quality of exterior cleanliness. The palace of the viceroy or governor, viewed from the harbour, seems in a dilapidated state, and, on a nearer examination, is much below, at least in its exterior, that at Rio Janeiro.

This building also, like it, forms part of a square, one side being reserved for the vice-regal residence, while the main guard, a kind of Bridewell, public offices, and houses, occupied the remainder; but the governor lives at present at a pretty spot, about two miles in the country. The open space in the centre is neglected. The situation is now by no means safe, for it is not very distant from the brink of a rugged cliff, which may not always preserve its stability.

Not only some of the public buildings, but parts also of the town, as already noticed, are built along the brow of the ridge. These are suspended in fearful jeopardy, hanging, as it were, by a few feet of earth, and threatening annihilation, not merely to themselves, but also to those beneath, and, as might be expected, this event actually took place. About five months ago part of the ground, loosened by some heavy rains, and overpowered by the weight of buildings above, with little support from beneath, suddenly gave way near the right extremity of the town. No previous intimation was afforded of this fatal catastrophe, so that people, houses, and gardens, both above and below, were buried in one common ruin. The horror and anxiety excited by this event through all classes, added to the cries of the sufferers, and the uncertainty how far the scene of ruin would extend, may be easily conceived; many in the immediate vicinity attempted to fly, while others, overpowered by terror, stood in breathless trepidation, not

knowing whither to go, or expecting half the city to be involved in the same calamity.

The opera-house, more than a mile distant, nods fearfully over a perpendicular cliff of loose earth, seemingly on the eve of dissolution from its base. The side of this cliff is supported, for the present, by a vast body of frame-work and oblique piles fixed against it, the other extremity resting on the opposite side of the road running beneath, which, though a principal avenue to the upper part of the town, is thus materially obstructed. The house itself, at a distance, has a light and handsome appearance, but, on a nearer view, wants finish: though only a late erection, it will be, in all probability, soon pulled down, on account of its dangerous position, for so great is the alarm at present, that an engineer attends to examine it whenever the governor honours the performance with his presence.

The interior is not inelegant, though inferior in size to that of Rio; it has, however, four tiers of boxes, but the upper is rarely occupied, except by cyprians. The royal, or governor's box, gilt and lined with crimson, directly fronts the stage, and takes in a portion of both first and second tiers. The others are all like our private boxes; they contain each four persons, and, like our own opera, persons only have access who take a whole box. The majority of these are altogether private; but the pit remains open for those who do not chuse the expence of the other, and by individuals, unaccompanied by ladies, is generally preferred. The lights and painting are good, and the stage has a very considerable descent to the orchestra; while the drop-scene presents some rural scenery, figures of the tragic and comic muses, and the motto—"*Ridendo castigat mores.*"

There are four monasteries in the city, belonging to the Benedictine, Carmelite, and Franciscan orders: these we have partly visited. The Benedictines are the most respected, and possess the highest reputation, not less for piety than learning. The Carmellites have ceased to practice the severities of their order; but a laxity of morals, independent of mere ceremonies, has caused, on more than one occasion, remonstrances and reprehension from the superiors. The monastery is fine, not only in structure, but antique dignity. The brothers, in addition to their other sins, do not seem very charitable in religious opinions; for when some of the officers visited it, in company with a catholic resident, one very seriously asked the latter "*Whether those men were Christians?*" The order of St. Francis is less esteemed than the others, probably from possessing few men of family among their members,

a species of pride that may be dispensed with in a cloister. Though bound by vows of poverty, they are, as at Rio-de-Janeiro, rich; and, according to scandal, for scandal does not spare the monastic garb even among good Catholics, sometimes indulge in the excesses that distinguished the early life of their founder.

I would not fail, you may conclude, to visit the convents. Of these there are five, three only of which are of consequence, and one of the number frequently contains married women whose husbands are absent. What say our English dames to this? Tell me, for you have experience, are they not a generation too perverse to submit to this restriction? In justice to the men, however, it should be said, that some ladies retire thither from choice, or economy, or to be secure from scandal, as well as *temptation*.

The churches are numerous; few, however, possess paintings or decorations so numerous or so good as those of St. Sebastian. The richest in wealth is in the lower town, built with a species of blue stone, resembling marble, brought hither for this express purpose from Lisbon. Two large chandeliers, numerous candlesticks, and other ornaments, are of pure silver; the prince-regent, when here, expressed surprise at seeing so many substantial proofs of the good things of this world enjoyed by the ecclesiastics. But a greater curiosity, considering the place, is a full-length picture of his Royal Highness the Prince Regent of England, in masonic regalia, occasionally seen in a recess of the body of the church. This, however, I have not myself witnessed.

This is an archbishop's see; Rio-de-Janeiro, or St. Sebastian, merely that of a bishop. The cathedral is a large pile of building: two of the canons are ex-jesuits, the only remains of that celebrated and extraordinary order now alive in Brazil. All the religious edifices present a similar spectacle, superfluous ornaments of all kinds, innumerable wax-lights, organs sounding, incense smoking, and priests officiating with the greatest solemnity within, while muskets, fire-works, drums, tambourines, clarionets, and shouts of the people, form the constant chorus without doors, to the worship of heaven among these orthodox Catholics, involuntarily reminding us of the preludes to a puppet-show, or a play-booth in Bartholomew fair. A liberal and enlightened, though at the same time zealous Catholic, who saw the absurdity of all this mummery, very keenly remarked to me on one of these occasions, *If fire-works and music form passports to heaven, the people of St. Salvador are sure to be saved.*"

Cocked-hats and swords are not yet out of fashion among

the elder class of men of respectability. I have met many in the mornings labouring through the crowds and filth of the lower town; the younger universally adopt our dress. The lower class smoke continually; the majority of the higher do the same, as well as many ladies, for whom there is generally prepared a milder species of segar; snuff is also universally used.

The dress of the fair sex is showy, resembling the French more than the English. In full dress, the bosom and arms are liberally exposed, a singular circumstance among a people, if not jealous, at least only just escaped from jealousy; yet this passion is not an unfrequent companion to voluptuousness. Flowers and precious stones ornament the head; gems are here so plentiful, that their profusion about the person is scarcely a proof of wealth. Education, it is said, by they who are intimate in families, has done little toward ornamenting the minds of the ladies; but in the happy countries of Spain and Portugal this accomplishment is not always deemed necessary.

The female face here may be termed animated and expressive, rather than what we call handsome. The rose and the lily do not germinate in every clime; and the languishing brunettes of Brazil have at least fine eyes, teeth, hair, and commonly good figures, if not spoiled by long waists, to compensate this neglect of nature. The language also, naturally soft, flows from their lips with a *naiveté* uncommonly interesting to strangers. I have heard many random censures on the state of public morals; sweeping condemnations, however, as they cost the orators no trouble, shew a want of liberality, as well as of taste and of discrimination. For a breach of the nuptial vow does not seem a more frequent occurrence than in other places, or at least, if it exists, is better concealed; formerly the injured husband, in the first moments of rage, sometimes inflicted death on his faithless partner; latterly, the punishment of solitary confinement has been generally superadded to the loss of honour.

I will surprise you perhaps, by saying, that *masonry* is much admired and followed, though persecuted in the more bigotted Catholic countries, as Portugal, Spain, and Italy, by the governments. There are here three lodges of the society, which boast among their members the governor, archbishop, and the majority of the principal people, who do not, however, publicly own it; several of the minor clergy have been lately initiated, which may probably explain the reason, if the statement be true, of the painting of an exalted personage, the Grand Master of England, being in their possession. The

prince-regent fancies there is treason and jacobinism in the name of freemason, an opinion supported by some of his ministers, and re-echoed by the prejudices of the lower classes. Foreigners, however, known to be masons, receive friendly attentions from the initiated, which others will look for in vain.

Three regiments are quartered in the city and vicinity, one of which consists of people of colour; the soldiers are well-dressed, but receive no more than two-pence-halfpenny per diem. A numerous, though not very efficient, police parade the streets, like mock-heroic characters on the stage, armed with huge swords, that rattle on the pavement *in terrorem* to offenders. An appeal to the stiletto is now rare, though a soldier suffered lately in Rua Fort St. Pedro. When the last English expedition to the Cape of Good Hope touched here, an officer of dragoons, and another of the India Company's service, who imprudently accosted some ladies in the Opera-house, were way-laid on their return from it, and murdered; others received severe wounds. The bodies of the two unfortunate sufferers were dragged to the beach the succeeding morning, to be owned by their indignant countrymen.

There are two or three hospitals, one of which receives foreign seamen when sick. The Naval Arsenal is extensive, and may be rendered very fine; timber in any quantity, and of the finest quality for ship-building, grows in the woods, not many miles off, so that the port may be rendered a grand depôt for the national navy.

The population amounts to about 80,000, though commonly estimated higher; some even make it exceed 100,000, but this is much over-rated; the number of whites and mulattoes may be 18,000. They are in general behind the people of St. Sebastian in knowledge, and more attached to old customs. The library contains about 5000 volumes in different languages, besides receiving regular supplies of the English newspapers and pamphlets, which serve to diffuse a spirit of information and inquiry. In general, there exists a strong bias toward independence, and a republic should the seat of government be again transferred to Europe; but otherwise no measure of this kind is likely to be attempted; St. Salvador, however, has some right to complain of undue partiality toward Rio-de-Janeiro; for a species of rivalry having always existed between the cities, the commerce of the former has been more than once threatened with very unjust restrictions.

The favourable disposition of the prince-regent himself toward the city, was publicly expressed during his visit. Its situation, prospect, and importance, besides the beauty of the adjoining country, charmed him; he wished much to make it

his residence; but political reasons, combined with the opinions of the ministry, set him down, not very contentedly, at Rio. I must confess I admire his taste. Independent of mere enjoyment, St. Salvador has within itself the means of becoming the most rich and powerful place in Brazil; its central situation, products, population, an extensive intercourse with the other parts of America, besides Europe and Africa, a good harbour, and unlimited means of increasing all these advantages by the slightest efforts of a wise and liberal government, point it out for the true capital of the country. Rio-de-Janeiro is, indeed, more capable of being defended, its harbour is better, the diamond mines are in the vicinity, and it has more command of Rio-de-la-Plata; besides these, other causes, not so generally known, may have decided the choice of government.

It is remarkable, that many of the people believe Great Britain has a longing eye to the possession of Brazil. The origin of this opinion is not easy to trace, except it be to the general jealousy entertained of English influence in the affairs of the government. The slave-captures also, on the coasts of Africa, have caused considerable clamour against our country; this, however, is but the usual bitter animosity felt by all commercial men, who, being detected adventuring in speculations contrary to treaties or national law, complain of tyranny and injustice, when galled by the loss of their property; as well might thieves complain of officers of justice. St. Salvador has not only a large share in this traffic; but, according to credible report, furnishes false contracts, colours, and papers to foreign speculators in human flesh.

Cotton, coffee, dye-woods, tobacco, cacao, form the principal exports; vast quantities of tapioca, and others of the farinacea, are prepared and sold for a trifle, or exported; fruits and other vegetables likewise abound. Large manufactories of glass and earthenware in the vicinity, supply not only the city, but all the settlements on the coast. I have before alluded to the abundance of timber for ship-building; ambergrease is sometimes picked up on the shores of the bay; and the whale-fishery, by activity, might be rendered a source of considerable emolument. A few of the more turbid streams occasionally bring down small portions of gold. Several years ago, a large piece of discoloured native copper, half-immersed in a branch of a river, and on which washerwomen had from time immemorial beat linen, was discovered to be metal, by a man amusing himself with a knife. The mass weighed 2800 pounds, and was nearly pure; but government seizing the prize, the discoverer reaped no advantage from it, being sent

home, and deposited in the cabinet of curiosities, at Lisbon; the lower classes, however, to this day, believe it was gold.

Besides the flowers and sweetmeats prepared in the nunneries, and usually carried away by visitors for presents, another article, termed Bahia beads, is in much request for necklaces and bracelets. These are formed of the purest gold, so minute in the workmanship that if once displaced, it is difficult to restring them. A set for a lady costs about fifteen milreas, or, at the present rate of exchange, about four guineas; considerable ingenuity is likewise displayed in the manufacture of other trinkets. Topazes, amethysts, rubies, emeralds, aqua marinas, and crystals scarcely inferior in water to the topaze, bear a higher price than might be expected so nigh their native spot; deceptions are also frequent. These, along with a variety of small wares, either of native or Lisbon manufacture, are sold in a mart resembling our Exeter Change, situated in the lower town, beyond the market. The latter is small and filthy, filled with vegetables, dried and fresh fish, flesh meat, besides many heterogeneous articles.

Pernambuco, December 29, 1813.

On Christmas-day we cast anchor in the great bay of Pernambuco, a wide wilderness of waters, exposed to the whole fury of the Atlantic ocean, without a place of shelter (for large vessels at least) from the peltings of pitiless storms. At the bottom of it, about eight miles from us, rise the spires and buildings of the town, like a mass of organized inorganization. To the northward, lies the pretty little town of Olinda, the houses seemingly large, and white, interspersed with groves and gardens, like an assemblage of English country-houses. Midway between us and the towns, rides a fleet of merchantmen ready for the voyage homeward, rocking to and fro on the troubled element, as if tossed by a gale of wind at sea. On every other side the view is bleak, wild, and cheerless; we cannot be said to be either at sea, or in harbour; and disturbed as it is by the swell of the ocean, it would be an inconvenient spot for the operations of commerce, were it not for a snug little harbour, which I will now sketch.

Across the bottom of the bay runs a huge reef of coral rock, formed by nature like a broad, solid wall; against this barrier, which is elevated above high-water mark, the winds and waves continually beat in vain. Originally, however, it had many inequalities and breaches, which the Dutch, who, for many years possessed Pernambuco, repaired by masses of cut stone clamped together by bars of iron, thus rendering it more compact and regular. The intention was to raise it considerably

higher, and build warehouses on the summit; so that boats, or even ships, might throw their cargoes in at the doors; the retreat of that nation, however, destroyed the scheme, though its remains form a memento of characteristic industry. Near the Olinda shore the reef abruptly terminates, leaving a narrow passage for vessels drawing not more than sixteen feet water; in entering they pass an old tower to the left, built on the end of the reef, and mounting a few guns. Besides this, there are three strong forts between Olinda and Pernambuco, that command the approach to this entrance. The harbour itself is a long basin, not more than 200 yards broad, which, being protected by the reef, remains still and unruffled when, without, the waves are thundering tumultuously against the barrier; within, the vessels are ranged in tiers, and load and unload without difficulty.

Glad to be relieved from the monotony of a ship, I took the first opportunity of hurrying on-shore; and, along with a friend, experienced from Mr. G——, an English merchant, though strangers, the utmost attention. Under his guidance, we perambulated the town to see what was worthy of notice; but I assure you, without pretending to any unnecessary squeamishness, we saw very little to admire, except a busy, populous place, not at all deficient in dirt, a variety of shops, people bustling to and fro, and boys hawking innumerable parrots through the streets, which are regularly offered to every Englishman for sale.

From Olinda, toward the bottom of the bay, runs a peninsula, the extremity of which is connected with an islet by a bridge, and the islet again joined to the main on the opposite side by a second bridge, newly erected. On this disjointed ground stands Pernambuco; it is of considerable length, but of little breadth, the harbour being in front, and a stream of water running to Olinda in the rear, so that the peninsula thus formed is in some places only a few hundred yards across. The ground is low and sandy; the sun also strikes down with vigour, which, on account of the confined disposition of the streets, is not often modified by the sea-breeze. The natives feel little inconvenience from this; and we, you know, are pretty well seasoned to heat; but raw Europeans, wrapped in the warm woollen fabrics of Europe, are little at their ease in pedestrian exercises; but though hot, the town is not unhealthy.

A conspicuous church, near the beach, has little to recommend it but an indifferent print of the Last Supper; the head of our saviour was expressive; but the noise of dice, and the hum of gamblers, heard at a little distance, in the public streets,

was strangely incongruous with our ideas of local propriety. A wide street, possessing a flagged foot-path, leads hence to the right extremity of the town; the majority of the others are paved. Of the houses many are good, and others of an opposite description, as well as irregular and neglected; some are two, some three stories high; several project into the streets, others recede from them, as if ashamed to show their decayed fronts, for inspection.

The mercantile-walk, or exchange, is not worthy of particular notice; the custom-house also is mean, considering the commerce of the port. The bridge, connecting the peninsula with the island, being crowded on both sides with small houses and shops, may be passed by a stranger without knowing he is crossing the water; these look poor and mean, though owned by some of the richest people in the town, who have acquired wealth by keeping confidential servants here, to retail cotton cloths, hardware, beads, brushes, and a variety of articles to the lower classes. The new bridge has now been finished ten months; it seems a strong and sufficiently neat work of stone, about half a furlong in length, with iron-wood railings, and built by a Lisbon engineer, in the place of a crazy, wooden structure, nearly as old as the foundation of the town. The residence of the governor is by no means what we might expect; it has neither extent nor neatness to recommend it.

I could gain no accurate statement of the amount of the population, except that general opinions estimate it between 40 and 50,000, of all colours and conditions. The whites preserve the same general characteristics that distinguish the other Brazilians; but in general information, as well as manners, they are considered behind the people of Bahia and Rio de Janeiro.

Not more than half a dozen British merchants reside here, who support the usual credit of the name with honour to themselves. For, in spite of a little vanity, religious prejudice, and commercial rivalship, our national character is esteemed by the natives. You will be surprised, perhaps, when I say this is not always the case abroad. It is, however, an undoubted fact, which, though painful to our self-love, must not be denied, that the generality of foreigners, while they invite our intercourse, and praise individuals, affect to dislike us as a nation. This is a distinction, probably, of which we may boast rather than otherwise: for it arises from our power, our commercial and naval superiority, our native independence and foreign influence, our national pride and its usual accompaniments, faith and honour,—in fact, from all those causes

that are believed to exalt the British people above many others.

Pernambuco has been at all times a place of considerable note. In 1595, Captain Lancaster, an English navigator, after committing several depredations on the coast, attacked and took it, carrying off a large quantity of treasure, according to the buccaneering system of the age. The Dutch, who had taken some pains to improve the port, quitted it with regret in 1654, though for a valuable consideration,—the people here say for no less than twelve tons of specie. Its principal exports at present consists of arairaba and other dye woods, a species of bark equal to any from Spanish America, cordage made from the rind of the guaxima-tree, fustic, and the great staple commodity,—cotton.

The latter, being the best we are acquainted with, is highly esteemed in the European market, and bears a higher price by one-tenth than any other; and, besides its intrinsic qualities, is never pressed too closely in packing, so as to destroy the long grain, so much esteemed by the manufacturer. It is reared so far as forty, fifty, or even a hundred leagues from the coast, put into bags, slung over a horse like panniers, and in this manner brought to town. The cultivators, rude and unacquainted with the habits of commerce, expect to be paid in specie, goods being seldom, and bills never taken. During the present year the demand far exceeds the supply, for though the vessels under our protection take 56,000 bags, many others remain in the harbour unable to procure cargoes. This, I understand, would not be the case were the orders from England regular; but complaints are made by the merchants and growers of a preference given to the same article from the United States.

Brazil was discovered in the year 1500, by the Portuguese navigator Cabral, in his voyage to India, and has been justly considered a grand appendix to the immortal labours of Columbus. It was at first eagerly colonized by adventurers of every class, charmed by the climate and country, and zealous in the pursuit of wealth; but this ardour abating, it became neglected. The settlers, quarrelling among themselves, attempted to subdue each other by force; wars, rapine, and disorders of every description, were the consequence; and at this period was formed the community, or republic of St. Paul, small, indeed, in extent, but celebrated for every species of atrocity. The mother-country, nearly at the same time, becoming subject to the hated dominion of Spain under Philip II. increased the general confusion and neglect in all her co-

lonies. The Dutch, likewise, struggling against the tyranny of Philip, thought the opportunity favourable for attacking Brazil; and, notwithstanding continual opposition, made good their footing for above half a century. Fifteen years, however, after the accession of the House of Braganza, partly by negociation, partly by fighting, they relinquished their situation for Surinam and the other settlements in Guiana. Since that period the country has remained quietly subject to Portugal, except occasional altercations with Spain about limits, which were ridiculous enough, considering that so many hundred miles, near their respective boundaries, remain totally unexplored, unnoticed, and even unnamed.

In this great and valuable country, extending from the second or third degree of north latitude to the banks of Rio de la Plata, or 2000 miles long by about 1800 broad, embracing great varieties of soil and climate, the natural products are unbounded. A bare list would alone furnish a small volume; but among the principal we find tobacco, sugar, cotton, cloves, cochineal, indigo, coffee, cacao, whale-bone, oil, skins of various kinds, rare and valuable woods, dye-woods, nitre, gums, hides, ivory, ostrich-feathers, ambergris, sponge, gold, silver, pearls, and every species of precious stones. Rice, wheat, maize, culinary vegetables of every description, as well as fruits, immense herds of wild cattle, and all the domestic animals, supply the immediate wants of life, while the materia medica receives, from the same bountiful source, cinchona, jalap, cascarilla, ipecacuanha, storax, tamarinds, sassafras, sarsaparilla, guaiacum, ginger, and, indeed, all its principal treasures. Between Maranham and Cape St. Roque, numerous salt-works supply the greater part of the country. Cotton is principally raised near Pernambuco, Maranham, and Paria; the two latter enjoy considerable trade with England, and formerly furnished silk; but the culture of this article has declined. The mines were first worked about 1680; at present, they are much diminished in value; but the quantity of specie exported during the last century alone, is calculated at 160 millions, exclusive of private property. The diamond mines belong solely to government, and are still valuable; many, however, are purloined in the different operations, and deceptions practised with others, notwithstanding regulations of unusual strictness.

The commerce of such a country, abounding in every species of wealth, even to prodigality, cannot well be destroyed, notwithstanding the arbitrary edicts, monopolies, neglect, or jealousy of the parent-state, or of a bad government. It has therefore not ouly improved, but for many years formed the

main prop of Portugal, tottering under political decrepitude, amid the growth and strength of more vigorous neighbours. The vast capacities of Brazil, however, are yet scarcely known to the people, nor have its latent powers, though spontaneously bursting asunder the bonds of interested policy, been called forth by encouragement; but, on the contrary, repressed, lest they should acquire a preponderance fatal to the influence of the mother-country. It is this motive that has not only kept Brazil degraded below its just rank among countries, and directly impeded the best efforts for its improvement, but rendered vain many of the bounties of Heaven, and the labours of man. The riches of the country, indeed, are all its own, its imperfections those of the government; and the many instances of illiberality and misrule displayed by both Spain and Portugal, toward their South American colonies, have been the effect of design, not, as is supposed, a want of knowledge of their true interests. This system, however bad in itself, or contrary to the undoubted rights of mankind, has partly succeeded. Those countries have preserved their colonial possessions, (except, perhaps, part of the Spanish, in consequence of extraneous causes,) while Great Britain, by adopting a liberal policy, by opening her channels of commerce, and disseminating her stores of knowledge, lost, at the moment they were likely to become useful, the colonies on which she had expended so much care and treasure. But this must ever be the case with extensive dependencies. It is no more than the natural progress of cause and effect; it is the common separation in nations as among families, of parent and child, when the latter has attained maturity and wealth, and the desire to remain without controul. When the acquisition of these is carefully prevented, we may then hope to prolong its dependance: and this has been the policy of Spain and Portugal.

From the little that is generally known of the interior of the country, no accurate estimate can be formed of the amount of the white population. While at Bahia, I heard it reckoned, during a discussion on the subject, at 300,000. Some make it half a million. It is supposed, however, that the government itself does not know: but the former number, probably, approaches the truth. The proportion of slaves and free people of colour to the whites, is, in the cities, about six to one, but in the country a great deal less: perhaps, were the mass of population divided into ten parts, the whites would form two, the free people of colour one, and the remainder consist of slaves. The number of the latter imported into this country annually, some years ago, is stated at between twenty and thirty

thousand, or even more, a circumstance scarcely credible. At present it does not much exceed a fourth of that amount: but even this is too great for the interests of humanity.

The aboriginal tribes occasionally occupy parts of the coast between Rio de Janeiro and Bahia, as well as between Cape St. Roque and the estuary of the river of Amazons. Vague reports state them to be equally savage in disposition as in habits, and invincibly attached to a state of nature. It may, however, be doubted whether any humane or conciliatory means have been taken to render their manners otherwise. The whites finding them averse to become slaves, thought it of little importance to instruct their ignorance, or court their intercourse as friends, and now offer a few lame excuses, for a singular negligence that has, in a great measure, declined to adopt the easy and successful method of introducing civilization by missions. Had the jesuits not fixed their abode in Paraguay, Spain would not only have lost many good subjects, but probably found some active enemies.

They are under the middle size, with brown complexions, straight, coarse hair, dark eyes, as in all warm climates, well-proportioned limbs, strong, active, and like all people in a state of nature, acute in the perceptions of the senses. The number of tribes, as might be expected in so vast a country, is almost infinite; they differ in aspect, method of life, language, and customs, besides possessing various shades of mildness or barbarity. Some are represented to immolate their prisoners, and feast upon their remains; others to reduce them to slavery; a third class to treat them mildly; some like the recesses of the forests, some the mountains, some the banks of the Amazon, and its tributary streams: in short, any thing may be said of them, without fear of contradiction, from any precise knowledge we at present possess.

Quitting the perturbed roadstead of Pernambuco with a fine wind, unusual at this season, we passed between the main and the small island of Fernando de Noronha, of which the state of the weather afforded a favourable view. It is about ten or twelve miles in circumference, and 240 distant from the continent. The soil is bad, the surface of the island a succession of abrupt and rugged precipices, incapable of cultivation; the productions being therefore scanty, it is merely held by the Portuguese, as a place of banishment for male felons: but, as if to add to the terrors of this punishment, it is chiefly remarkable for being nearly, if not quite, destitute of women, a regulation so truly barbarous, and contrary to every feeling of nature, as well as the principles of good policy, that it is astonishing any government, formed of men,

should adopt it. While at Pernambuco, I was told there was not one female on the island. This probably may be incorrect; but the number is undoubtedly few, and these totally without the reach of the wretched criminals; so that if atrocious crimes are meant to be legalized, a more effectual method cannot certainly be adopted.

Between Pernambuco, or Cape St. Augustine and Cape St. Roque, forming the great eastern shoulder of South America, the coast has little worthy of notice, except a few villages and rivers; one of the latter, from its size, is, as well as two or three others on the Brazil coast, called Rio Grande. South of Cape St. Roque the shore runs off with a gentle declination to Cape Horn; but to the northward it strikes off at an acute angle, proceeding nearly due-west to the mouth of the river Amazon, embracing a fine, fruitful, well-watered country, and the two large towns of Maranham and Paria; thence, running north-west to the gulph of Darien, and onward to the bottom of the gulph of Mexico, it turns again due-north, as in Brazil. It is remarkable that, in this immense range of coast, there should be great similarity of feature in its generally low situation, thick woods, numerous rivers, degree of heat, and frequent unhealthiness.

The serenity of the south-east trade-wind offered nothing new, till, to the windward of the West-India Islands, the sea-weed, or fucus, attracted our attention, as it has the speculation of many philosophers. The cause of this substance appearing in this sea only is not explained; some say it is broken from its attachments at the bottom of the sea, and dies soon after rising to the surface; others, that it vegetates on the surface, and dies by sinking to the bottom, from the accumulation of extraneous matter. Near the western islands we were reminded of approaching a cold latitude in a cold season, by one or two gales. In the mouth of the channel we felt all the horrors of an English winter. Every unpleasant feeling, however, vanished with the first prospect of land; it created more warmth and vivacity than the glow of a tropical sun; and when jumping on the beach at Portsmouth, I could, in imitation of some ancient hero, have stooped to kiss the soil.

Adieu!—I hope soon to enjoy the pleasure of shaking hands in London; and, in the mean time, will employ mine in subscribing myself, with great respect and regard,

My dear sir,

Yours most faithfully, &c. &c.

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VIEW OF THE TOWN AND FORT OF MOZAMBIQUE.

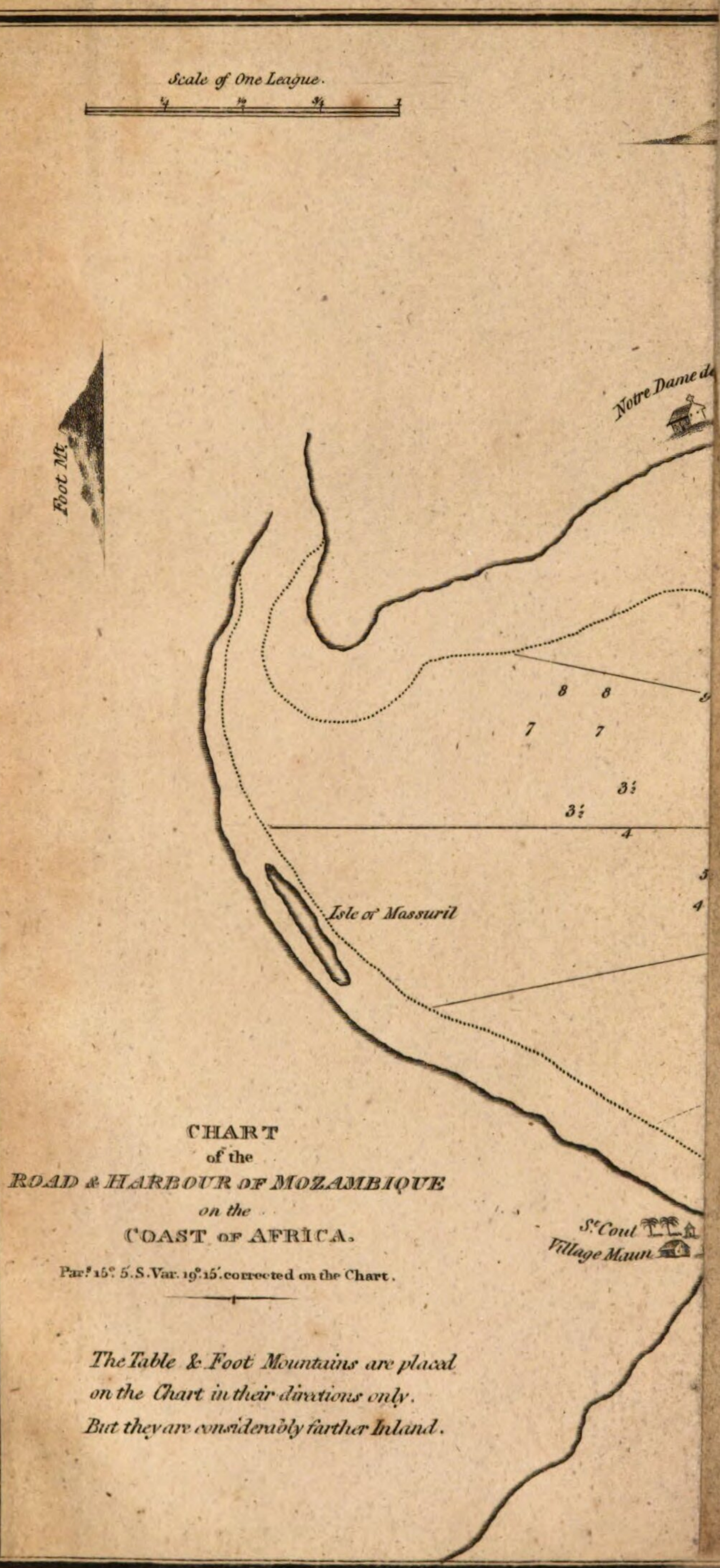

CHART
of the
ROAD & HARBOUR OF MOZAMBIQUE
on the
COAST OF AFRICA.

Par.l 15°. 5'. S. Var. 19°. 15'. corrected on the Chart.

The Table & Foot Mountains are placed on the Chart in their directions only. But they are considerably farther Inland.

BSB Bayerische StaatsBibliothek

MDZ Münchener DigitalisierungsZentrum Digitale Bibliothek

Prior, James,

Voyage along the eastern coast of Africa, to Mosambique, Johanna, and Quiloa to St. Helena ... in the Nisus frigate

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